The person charging this material is responsible for its return to the library from which it was withdrawn on or before the **Latest Date** stamped below.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University.

To renew call Telephone Center, 333-8400

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

MAY 02 1988

MAY 11 1993

FEB 11 1997

L161—O-1096

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Alternates

https://archive.org/details/widowsprigginsot00whit

WIDOW SPRIGGINS

AND OTHER SKETCHES.

BY

MRS. F. M. WHITCHER,

AUTHOR OF

"WIDOW BEDOTT PAPERS."

NEW YORK:

G. W. Dillingham, Publisher,

SUCCESSOR TO G. W. CARLETON & CO.

LONDON: S. LOW, SON & CO.

MDCCCLXXXVII.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1867, by

G. W. CARLETON & CO.,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

8/1
W58wid
LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

1111438

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

THE favorable reception which the public gave to the Widow Bedott Papers, by Mrs. F. M. Whitcher, has induced the publication of another volume of the works of the same author.

It is a natural desire that we wish to know something of the personal history of those who have amused or interested us, and the reader feels a claim upon a favorite writer, kindred to the claims of friendship.

For this reason, we have deemed it not inappropriate to accompany the present collection with a brief biographical sketch of their author.

It might at first be supposed, that the life of one whose writings prove her to have possessed such a remarkable variety of talents, must furnish rich and abundant material for an extended memoir. But it must be borne in mind, that true "genius" is often allied to great delicacy and reserve of character. And thus while it was apparent to all who knew Mrs. Whitcher, that she was a person of superior intellect, she was perhaps in every respect the opposite of all that we learn from the term, "a strong-minded woman." And so singularly modest and unobtrusive

were her habits, that her life might safely yield in variety of incident, to the humblest champion of woman's rights, or the most obscure victim of woman's wrongs.

While her only claim to eminence is found in the remarkable genius which her writings display; a respect for that shrinking timidity with which she ever avoided publicity, seems to forbid us to do more than to dwell upon those features of her character which are in some degree the property of her readers, and our sketch, therefore, will necessarily be meagre; but we shall enrich it with such extracts from her letters and her poems, as will give to the appreciative reader a better idea of her mental qualities than can be conveyed in any words of our own.

Mrs. Frances Miriam Whitcher, was the daughter of Mr. Lewis Berry, and was born at Whitestown, Oneida County, New York, on the first day of November, 1811.

This village shares with the township the name of its earliest settlers, and is one of the oldest, as well as one of the most beautiful villages in Central New York.

That fine scenery which everywhere marks the valley of the Mohawk River, is spread out with particular magnificence and beauty, in this immediate locality. The beautiful hills, the broad, luxuriant valley, and the gently flowing waters of the river, are among its natural attractions, while the noble elms, which cast their grateful shadows over its principal street, are a pleasant and perpetual memorial of those who might be truly termed its "first families."

In its earlier history, Whitestown was the shire town of Oneida County, and the courts being held here, added to its other attractions as a home for gentlemen of the

legal profession. Many whose names have been high in forensic distinction and brilliant upon the pages of history, were then counted among its citizens, and gave to the social circle of that time a character for liberal culture and refined taste inferior to none in the State.

Thus, fortunately, her early associations were such as not only furnished examples of superior mental excellence, but were well calculated to develop those germs of latent genius, the possession of which she showed even in childhood.

While yet only two years old, and ignorant of her alphabet, she learned to recite long pieces of poetry, and very early began making rhymes herself. The first of these of which any record is preserved, is a parody on the familiar verses entitled "My Mother," which were common in the juvenile Readers of that time. The "Grandfather" alluded to in the parody, was a member of her father's family, with whom the child was far from being a favorite. Her lines ran thus: —

Who was it, when our friends were here,
And in the room I did appear,
Said, "This is Middy, she's our dear"?
My Grandfather.

Who was it, when I swept the floor,
Would make me sweep it o'er and o'er,
And say, "Come back and sweep it more"
My Grandfather.

And when I let the platter fall,
Who said, as loud as he could bawl,
"Now just come back and break them all"?
My Grandfather.

A short time previous to the composition of this parody,

when five years old, she made "her first pictorial exploit," as she afterward termed it, by drawing the likeness of an old gentleman, who, by familiar, but not intentionally offensive joking, had incurred her displeasure.

The circumstance forms the subject of the first picture in a series of humorous sketches, which were made years afterward for a friend to whom she had promised an illustrated volume of her life.

Her first teacher seems to have been an antiquated maiden, who did not sufficiently gain her respect to escape her ridicule; for we find her in the same series in many sketches, where the position evidently was not chosen for the benefit of the sitter.

From this juvenile institution she was promoted to the primary department of the village academy, where her mirth-loving propensities found a new and wider field for exercise, which she did not fail to improve; for here nothing capable of a ludicrous construction escaped her delicacy to perceive, and ability to portray; and while this "mischief" often brought her under discipline, her punishments we find, in turn, made the subjects of her sketches — so emphatically did her ruling passion "grow by what it fed on."

A better account of this may be learned from her own words, in a letter to Mrs. Alice B. Neal, a friend to whom she was known only through the medium of the pen, and the sympathy of kindred intellectual tastes.

"Your last kind letter was very gratifying. The acquisition of a new friend is a source of great pleasure to me; for I assure you that it has never been my lot to have many friends. You possess the happy faculty of drawing all hearts at once to you; but I, unfortunately,

do not. And I will tell you what I believe to be the secret of it: I received, at my birth, the undesirable gift of a remarkably strong sense of the ridiculous. I can scarcely remember the time when the neighbors were not afraid that I would 'make fun of them.' For indulging in this propensity, I was scolded at home, and wept over and prayed with, by certain well-meaning old maids in the neighborhood; but all to no purpose. The only reward of their labors was frequently their likenesses drawn in charcoal and pinned to the corners of their shawls, with, perhaps, a descriptive verse below. Of course I had not many friends, even among my own playmates. And yet, at the bottom of all this deviltry, there was a warm, affectionate heart — if any were really kind to me, how I loved them!"

One little picture in the series alluded to from her "ideal world," which has pleased us particularly, is entitled "The Adventure." It is thus described by herself, during a walk on the banks of the river about a mile from her home, — she related to her companions thus:—

"Once I was walking here, when I saw on that stump of a tree a beautiful Bible all bound in gold lying open. I started to get it, when a little angel with shining wings came flying down towards it, and when I reached the place the book was a heap of ashes, and the angel was gone."

Her school education was completed in her native village, with the exception of some lessons in French, from a very superior teacher in the neighboring city of Utica, where she acquired a high proficiency in that language, but with an instinctive horror of affectation and display, she always avoided, both in conversation and in writing, the use of any foreign words or phrases.

In the art of drawing, in which she has left such abundant proof of her taste and skill, her only instruction was a few hints from a similarly gifted relative.

In epistolary correspondence she particularly excelled, her pen gliding without an effort into rhyme, and making the most trivial occurrences attractive by her happy power of expression, as well as by the most life-like pen drawings, with which her letters are embellished, and in which she often introduced herself in some most ludicrous or preposterous manner.

Nothing was allowed to escape her pencil or her pen, and even the every-day occurrences in a quiet family furnished material, which when embellished by her genius, became amusing and interesting. The following mock serious lines on the death of a pet crow, show her ability to mingle the ridiculous with the sublime: —

No sigh was heard, no tear was shed,
  And not a word was spoken,
But the pale cheek and drooping head
  Told how their hearts were broken.

There was no outward sign of woe,
  Though every hope had failed 'em,
A chance observer scarce would know
  That aught uncommon ailed 'em!

Manhood and youth and age were there,
  Touched with the same deep sorrow;
They thought of one whom they must bear
  To his barn-yard grave, to-morrow.

There in an old tin pan he lay,
  The once beloved and cherished;
Alas, how soon he passed away,
  How cruelly he perished!

And one was there, once gay and spry,
'Twas one that did adore him;
A maniac glare was in her eye,
She silently bent o'er him.

She loved the dear departed crow
Like dearest friend, or brother,
And watched his infant graces grow,
Just like some tender mother.

Love, like some tender flower of earth,
Long in her heart had wasted;
Tom, like the sun, had called it forth,
And death, like winter, blasted.

Her grief was silent, dark, and deep,
For, oh, she loved him, dearly;
'Tis never those who loudest weep,
That sorrow most sincerely.

There is a grief that dwells within,—
A grief beyond my telling;
When all the outward man grows thin,
But oh, the heart keeps swelling.

They tied his feet with cotton yarn,
And to his grave they bore him;
They buried him low behind the barn,
And stuck two shingles o'er him.

Then burst the torrent of her grief,
That long had lain concealed;
Her inward woes found some relief,
In being thus revealed.

"Oh never more," she wildly cried,
"His cheerful voice shall greet me,
He'll never wander by my side,
He'll never fly to meet me.

"He used to get upon my chair
When I was busy sewing;

And tangle up my braided hair,
Almost without my knowing.

"He used to steal my knitting sheath,
His legs were wondrous nimble,
And once I ducked him most to death
For carrying off my thimble.

"But let his faults forgotten be,
For he has gone forever;
His like again we ne'er shall see,
Oh, never! never!! never!!!"

Some words of comfort then I said,
In vain those words were spoken;
Despondingly she shook her head,—
I knew her heart was broken.

The views and opinions of John Calvin were believed and taught more than any other system of religious doctrine, in her native village at that time; and she was baptized in infancy, early instructed in the shorter catechism, and while yet in her teens, was, at the close of a revival, received into membership with the Presbyterian Church, a connection which was for many years retained. Her religious feeling and attachments at this time are very pleasantly recorded in her lines on the removal of the old church.

All silently the twilight falls,
This ancient temple round,
And mournfully within these walls
My echoing footsteps sound.

Well may this heart with sorrow swell,
These tears of sorrow flow,
I come to breathe a last farewell,
A last sad look bestow.

No more shall bands of brethren meet
  Within this hallowed place,
To worship at a Saviour's feet,
  And seek a Saviour's face.

No more the inquiring crowd shall press
  To learn the road to heaven;
Nor here the bleeding heart find peace,
  The mourner feel forgiven.

No more the word of life shall fall
  From hearts with love that burn,
Nor truth invite, nor mercy call
  The wanderer to return.

No longer here shall music roll
  Its thrilling strains along,
Nor pure devotion lift the soul,
  In union with the song.

Here often hath my God revealed
  His goodness and His power;
But now, old Church, thy doom is sealed,
  And thou must be no more.

I stand alone within these walls;
  There is no being nigh
To check the bitter tear that falls,
  Or chide the rising sigh.

I weep, dear consecrated spot,
  That thou must cease to be,
And oft, full oft, when thou art not,
  Shall memory turn to thee.

I love thy sacred aisles! — 'twas here
  Where first my footsteps trod,
And mother gave, with holy fear,
  That little one to God.

And oh! 'twas here that awful vow,
  To be the Lord's, was spoken!

The painful thought comes o'er me now,
How oft that vow I've broken.

Alas! my soul, how oft thy wings,
E'en in the house of God,
Have sunk 'neath vain imaginings,
And kissed earth's fleeting clod.

I love this place! While musing here
On pleasures known no more,
Some pleasant thoughts of former years
Float my lone spirit o'er.

Here I was wont to sit with some
I loved in childhood's day;
Many are in the silent tomb,
And many far away.

Here have I gazed with tearful eye,
Upon the death-cold brow
Of some whose spirits dwell on high,
Whose forms are mould'ring low.

Perchance e'en now that sainted throng,
Those spirits of the dead,
May glide these ancient aisles among,
Where they were wont to tread.

Methinks they've left those realms of light
And glory, where they dwell,
And hover o'er this place to-night,
That once they loved so well.

And many forms remembered well,
And once most dear to me,
Who long have ceased on earth to dwell,
Among that band I see.

Methinks I see that blest one too,
So lovely and so dear;
Who, scarce one little month ago,
Was sweetly singing here,

Young Harriet, who with dying breath,
The Saviour's love confessed,
Exulting raised a song in death,
And, swan-like, sunk to rest.

Sweet spirit! lift that tuneful voice
As thou wert wont of yore,
Let these devoted walls rejoice
In thy sweet strains once more.

'Tis gone! The heav'nly train is flown!
The sweet illusion fades!
And I am musing here alone,
'Mid evening's gath'ring shades.

Farewell! doomed temple of the Lord,
For thee my tears shall flow;
I grieve to speak the parting word;
With ling'ring steps I go.

What, though upon this sacred spot
A statelier pile I see;
Dear house of God, when thou art not,
Shall memory turn to thee.

Later in life she found in the doctrines and teachings of the Protestant Episcopal Church, a system of religion more congenial with her taste, and more in harmony with her judgment.

In person Mrs. Whitcher was above the medium height, erect in figure, stately in her walk, with an air of reserve and dignity. Her large dark eyes were full of expression and soft liquid light. Her hair of glossy black was always kept in the most tasteful and careful manner, while her dress showed scrupulous neatness, and was characterized more by an absence of bad taste, than by any effort at effect in its arrangement.

One who often met her has said in our hearing,

"It seemed to me Mrs. Whitcher always wore the same dress," a remark that shows that she appreciated that sensible maxim, that "to be well dressed, a lady's attire should be so arranged as never to excite a thought."

She possessed a high degree of conversational ability in the circle of congenial friends; their presence seemed to inspire her, and to develop many little graces and attractions which the first critical glance frightened away, so much that among strangers and ordinary acquaintances, she became reserved and timid to a degree which was often regarded as haughtiness and pride, or a sense of conscious superiority. But amid the genial circle of familiar friends, her eye brightened with intelligence, her features glowed with enthusiasm, while the liquid and harmonious flow of her words possessed almost the charming power of music.

The story of the Widow Spriggins was among the earlier productions of her pen, and was originally written for "The Mæonian Circle," a social and literary association, sustained by persons of taste and ability. The literary productions of the Circle were presented to its members in the form of a paper, which was for some time called "The Momus," a name which it fully merited. Among the members of the Circle, however, there were some who deemed the paper too much devoted to "the harmless comedy of life," and it was accordingly changed in name, and somewhat in character, to "The Mæonian." The circumstances form the subject of an article from the "Mæonian," which may be found in the present volume.

The Widow Spriggins' articles were afterward favorably, though not very extensively, introduced to the public by Mr. Calvert Comstock, late editor of the Albany

Argus, who was at that time editing a weekly paper at Rome, New York, and was a personal friend of their author.

She received no pecuniary compensation for any of her articles, until the summer of 1846, when she became a regular contributor to "Neal's Saturday Gazette." Its editor, who was a humorist of acknowledged ability, highly appreciated the genius of his contributor. But neither his enthusiastic praise, nor the flattering reception with which her productions were received by its readers, could overcome her habitual self-distrust and timidity. In a letter accompanying one of the Bedotts, she says: —

"I fear criticism; I fear 'the world's dread laugh.' I fear a repulse, a failure; there are a thousand things to make me shrink from taking a step which may look like courting publicity; and I assure you, nothing but the hope of one day reaping some pecuniary benefit, induces me to offer myself as a contributor to your paper."

On the sixth of January, 1847, she was married to the Rev. B. W. Whitcher, and in the following spring removed to Elmira, Chemung County, where Mr. Whitcher assumed the pastoral care of St. Peter's church.

The following playful rhyming letter, written during her husband's temporary absence from home, a few days after their marriage, may not be inappropriate here.

I will weave an idle rhyme, dear,
A simple rhyme for thee,
For it seems a weary time, dear,
Since yester morn to me.
It seems a long, long while, dear,
That I've been left alone;
And I miss thy cheerful smile, dear,
And I miss thy kindly tone.

Through the busy morning hours, dear,
I've missed thy cheering word;
While I watered all the flowers, dear,
And fed the little bird.
I've been busy in your study, dear,
And made it nice and neat,
But I found it rather muddy, dear,
(Why don't you clean your feet?)

Your books and papers all, dear,
I've arranged the nicest way;
Your bump of order's small, dear,
It grieves me quite to say.
Ere you've been here a day, dear,
'Twill look as bad as ever,
Don't say I'm *Caudling*, pray, dear,
For I never mean to — never.

It was a real pleasure, dear,
To fix each tumbled shelf,
And each old dud a treasure, dear,
It looked so like yourself.
I've been talking with my mother, dear,
And with my father, too,
With my sisters and my brothers, dear,
And still the theme was you.

* * *

The weary day has flown, dear,
'Tis silent evening now,
And I am all alone, dear,
But, Willie, where art thou?
And how employed? not smoking, dear,
Good gracious! if you should, —
But surely you were joking, dear,
When you threatened that you would.

Good-night — good-night! God bless thee,
My dearest and my best;
May no dark dreams oppress thee,
But angels guard thy rest;

From every pain and sorrow, dear,
To guard thy precious life,
And bring thee back to-morrow, dear,
To thy true and loving wife.

Her peculiar traits of character were not particularly adapted to her new sphere of life; her retiring and reserved disposition illy qualified her for a position which makes so great demand upon the demonstrative sympathies, as that of a clergyman's wife. And, although she found in Elmira a few whose friendship and kindness were ever held in grateful remembrance, the greater number of her new acquaintances regarded her with distrust and suspicion; and her greatest pleasure was found in her domestic relations. As a wife, she was ever kind and thoughtful, placing a high estimate upon her marriage duties, requiring the most refined and exalted tenderness, which it was her constant aim to inspire.

In Elmira the "Bedott Papers" were continued and completed. The "Aunt Maguire Letters," published in Godey's Lady's Book, were written here, and a series in a different style under the name of "Letters from Timberville" were begun, which her death left incomplete. A few of the first chapters of the story of Mary Elmer were also written at this place.

Though Mrs. Whitcher's literary reputation will perhaps most particularly be identified with her humorous works, she has left in her little poems and sketches and in the graver composition of Mary Elmer, abundant proof that she was not confined, in the range of her genius, to any one department of literature, but might have gained a brilliant reputation in the various walks of authorship. Those who have known her heretofore only as the author of mirth-

provoking productions, will find with surprise the depth, tenderness, and spiritual beauty which her more serious writings reveal. Possessing at the same time an eye for the ridiculous, a sense of the grotesque in combination, and the quaint in character, with a genuine love of the beautiful, and admiration of the grand, her productions had power not only to please the fancy, but to satisfy the higher wants of the mind. Even her humorous articles do not stand upon their wit alone as their chief merit; true, they make you laugh, and thus they answer the true test of their excellence in this respect. And the Widow Bedott might have graduated as the very worst speller in the "bad spelling" school of literature so popular at the present day, but her humor was always the vehicle of sense "to point a moral or adorn a tale," and even when the widow discourses "on punkins," she reads a wholesome homily to the troublesome neighbor who "borroweth and repayeth not again."

As an appreciative critic has said, "There is as clear delineation of character in these writings as in the works of Dickens or Thackeray. They are the cleverest, as well as the most popular of any articles of the kind by an American author. Those doomed perforce to immortality by the hand now stilled forever, should be satisfied that they have secured what so many have labored assiduously to obtain."

Saxe finds "it is a very serious thing to be a funny man," and Mrs. Whitcher found it "a very serious thing" to be a funny woman. Few writers since the days of Coleridge have been so much at the same time the subject of panegyric by their friends and of censure from their enemies; for while the reading public were convulsed with

laughter over the inimitable drollery and cleverness of her sketches, and editors were eagerly striving to secure the popularity which her contributions commanded in whatever publication they appeared, their author was being assailed with the greatest vituperation and personal insult from those who fancied they had unwittingly furnished models for her sketches; and in one instance Mr. Whitcher was threatened by a man with legal prosecution for damages, which Mrs. Samson Savage had done to characteristics which he fancied belonged exclusively to his wife, and other less prominent characters were zealously searched out and applied, as many an indignation meeting could witness. "This means you," and "this means such a one," they said, as each fitted the garment to a neighbor's back, while all united in aiming resentment at the author with as much anger as if she had labelled their parcels with their individual names.

So high indeed ran the tide of angry feeling that it soon became apparent that Mr. Whitcher's usefulness as a clergyman would find fewer obstacles in some other parish.

Such a result was entirely unanticipated by Mrs. Whitcher. Her characters were not designed simply to represent individuals, but were types of different classes; and however closely they may apply to particular persons, it is illiberal to so universal a genius as hers as to attempt to confine its application simply to one locality. But not in Elmira alone were hunted up originals for her portraits. A few weeks after the publication of the sewing society articles, Mrs. Whitcher wrote thus to a friend:—

"It is an amusing fact that several villages are contending for the honor of being the birth-place of 'Mrs. Samson Savage.' A man from a village in —— County

came into one of the bookstores the other day to get some 'Lady's Books,' saying that they were all alive about it in his place, because they had a 'Mrs. Samson Savage' there. And we have heard from ——, a village twenty miles distant, that they have fitted the coat to a woman there."

And yet Mrs. Samson Savage and Mrs. J. Pixley Smith are only representatives of that large class where ignorance and vulgarity are only made more conspicuous by wealth. Sam Ludlow is a character by far too common in real life; an unruly son of a ruling deacon; while Permilla Spriggins is but a pitiful illustration of the effect of the continual reading of love stories on vain and weak-minded girls. Almost any one can find "a Hugelina," a would-be-literary character among their own acquaintances, however limited the circle may be.

It is true Mrs. Whitcher has been charged with satirizing, in some of her characters, things which should be held sacred from ridicule. But whether Sam Ludlow "gets religion" for the purpose of getting hold of the "old man's" purse-strings, or the Widow Bedott resorts to Elder Sniffles for religious instruction with *habeas corpus* intentions in her mind; if we examine closely we find that it is only where selfishness and hypocrisy steal the cloak of piety, that they are held up and made at once odious and ridiculous.

Few lives have perhaps furnished better examples of sincere piety and devotion than hers. That rare humility of which we have already spoken, was not only a part of the ornament of "a meek and quiet spirit," but of one scrupulous in the conscientious discharge of duty. She not only loved the public services of the church, but was constant

and faithful in those devotions which receive the promise of "Him who seeth in secret."

The following lines written during a period of suffering, show how well she had learned that hardest of all Christian lessons, resignation to the solemn ascription, "Thy will be done."

Afflict me, Father; let thy heavy rod
Fall on my sinful head;
I would not shun the sufferings of my God,
Whose blood for me was shed.

Afflict me, Father; I will take the cross
Unmurmuringly and still,
By thy good help; and bear all earthly loss,
If I may do thy will.

Ay, slay me, Father, and I will not fear
The coming of Death's dart,
If I may see the Lord's kind angel near,
To strengthen my weak heart.

Not only in religious duties, but in the offices of friendship was she eminently uniform and faithful, and a good impression once made upon her feelings was enduring. In illustration of this tenacity of feeling, we insert a letter which was written not many years before her death, and which refers to an affection, of which "Time but the impression stronger made." This letter was addressed to the same person as the one from which our former extract was made.

"I was quite alone all last evening, and my mind wandered to you. I cannot tell why it is, but your *idea* is always associated in my imagination with a dear sister of mine, who died at sixteen, when I was only five years old.

I recollect her perfectly. They say she was a genius; and I remember that she was beautiful and joyous, and always good to me. I loved her better than any one else. She used to put me every night in my little crib, and sit and tell me stories till I went to sleep, and hear me say my prayers and little hymns. She had a thousand winning ways. There was one pretty mark of love that seems very pleasant to me now as I look back to it. She used often to reward me for being good, by putting some trifle under my pillow after I was asleep, and it made me so happy to wake in the morning and find it. How easy it is to please a child!

"This sweet sister took more pains with me than anybody else ever did. It was a great calamity that I lost her. Yet I have always felt that there was still a bond between us. When I was little, I used to dream of her almost every night, and, as I grew older, I thought about her a great deal. In my lonely rambles, I often fancied that she called me; even now I sometimes think I can hear her distinctly pronounce my name in the night. I know not why it is so, but I fancy that you are like her. I was thinking of it last evening as I sat alone, and I threw aside my sewing and scratched down these simple verses to you. View them, dear ——, not as *poetry*, but as a little token of affection."

Of the "verses" here mentioned, we will select two, as illustrative of her attachment to the memory of her sister, and of her belief in the intimate union between departed spirits and their friends on earth: —

True, some will call it fancy's flight,
And say it ne'er can be,
That in the wakeful hours of night
An angel speaks to me.

"The wondrous and mysterious ties
Some hearts can never know,
That link the loved in paradise
With those they love below."

Another little poem addressed to the same sister ran thus:—

MY SISTER.

Would I were sleeping on thy peaceful breast,
Friend of my infant years!
Thou who couldst lull my wayward heart to rest,
And soothe my childish fears.

Oh, 'tis a blessed thing like thee to die
Before the dark hours come!
Before the light reflected from on high
Is lost in earthly gloom.

Peace to thee, bud of paradise! expand
In the Lord's garden; there,
The flowers are nurtured by the Almighty hand
To bloom in heavenly air.

Look down on me, O sister! think of me,
By sin and suffering tost;
Lonely and sad my heart turns back to thee,
So loved! so early lost!

In the autumn of 1850, Mrs. Whitcher returned to Whitestown. Her literary labors had been almost suspended during the year just passed, as her time had been occupied in the care of her infant daughter. Few women have discharged with higher appreciation or greater love their maternal duties, than was now shown in her devotion to her child. Her health, which had for some time been delicate, now began more perceptibly to fail, and the symp-

toms of the consumption, which for a long time had hung like a threatening shadow over her, now made their presence more apparent. Still she declined to receive medical aid, feeling reluctant to begin a contest where the struggle promised to be long, and the result uncertain.

It soon became apparent to those who loved her that it was,

> "The little rift within the lute,
> That by and by should make its music mute
> And slowly widening, silence all the sound!"

Prompted by maternal affection, she applied herself to making her child's wardrobe, and, as opportunity offered, resumed her labor on the story of Mary Elmer.

It had long been her intention to write something in a graver style than anything which she had hitherto offered to the public. Much as she excelled in the comic vein, we think it was not chosen to gratify her own taste or inclination, for in one of her letters written from Elmira, she says, "I am heartily sick of Bedotting and Maguiring, and only wish I could be as well paid for more sensible matter." She would no doubt have found more pleasure in the exercise of a higher and purer taste, but her inclination was overruled by circumstances. The intense pathos of Mary Elmer may have been heightened by the fact that it was written during a period of physical suffering, but it proves that its author possessed as great power over the pathetic as the risible emotions of the reader, and like the "immortal bard" when she chose to "come no more to make you laugh," possessed equal ability to present "such solemn scenes as cause the eye to flow."

Like many other humorists, her natural tendency was more to melancholy than to mirth, and we learn from one

who loved her, that her pen which was employed so successfully for the amusement of others, was often guided by an eye dim with unshed tears.

Although, like Hood, she had found the public ear more open to melodies than to maladies, with him she felt that "a life of mere laughter is like music without its bass, or a picture of vague unmitigated light, while an occasional melancholy is like those rich old glooms of Rembrandt."

The pathos of Mary Elmer was as easy to her pen as the humor of Spriggins or Bedott; for her gifts were like song to the bird, or perfume to the flower; and thus the success of her writings does not depend upon her energy, for she was easily discouraged, and always self-distrusting, while her humility kept her always from self-assertion, and often from effort. Thus her life became one of observation, rather than of action; and to the last her literary productions were cast doubtingly upon the uncertain stream of public favor.

She never showed any undue devotion to the material and practical, and seemed strangely unconscious of the possession of those talents, which, if united with greater worldly wisdom, might earlier have brought her the grateful reward of fame, as well as those more tangible returns which the world counts as the criterion of success.

That remarkable sagacity with which she appreciated the springs of human passion, and which with such rare perspicuity her writings display, she seldom brought into working use, for she was credulous and unsuspecting in a marked degree.

The story of Mary Elmer, on which she bestowed her

last literary labor, was left unfinished. The last letter she ever penned was one which accompanied some chapters of her manuscript to her publisher, and was written only three weeks before her death. From it we make an extract:—

"I never sent off a manuscript so unsightly as this. But I can do no better. You will see that it bears evidence to the trembling hand and miserable body sustained by opiates. Oh, the horrid stuff! There would never be any danger of my becoming an opium-eater from choice. I hope the compositor will not be utterly confounded. I send three chapters, and the rest will be forthcoming as soon as circumstances will permit. I have been very desirous to finish this story, probably the last I shall write. And I trust there will be nothing in it 'which, dying, I should wish to blot.' Perhaps Mr. —— may think the style too plain and homely. I have been so anxious to avoid the grandiloquent style of many of our female story writers, that I may have gone too far the other way. I have become so entirely disgusted with that sort of composition applied to the commonest and most trifling subjects, as well as to those more important, that I never have patience to get through an article of that description."

Her manuscript has been carefully preserved by Mr. Whitcher, and it was not until after repeated efforts to get it completed by others had failed, that the present writer attempted the task of "ending," not to say "finishing" it, not unconscious of the presumption with which the act might be regarded by many, for one without literary experience, or even literary ambition, to attempt to add to anything a genius like hers had left incomplete, yet anx-

ious to give to usefulness a little tale which seemed quite too good to be lost.

After sending away her last letter, her health began to fail more rapidly, and her time was devoted to more immediate preparation for death.

Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living and Dying was now her constant companion, as it had been a solace and comfort in hours of health.

She received with humility the holy communion, and all the consolations which the Church of England has in store for her departing children.

The sun which rose on the fifth anniversary of her bridal day, shed its last rays into the room where she lay clothed in the bridal robes of death. With the solemn service of the Church she had so much loved, they committed her body to the dust.

In the rural grave-yard of her native village, in the little enclosure where lie those to whom she was connected by family ties, and beside the sister for whose companionship she had so long and fondly yearned, she rests. And who can say but in "those heavenly habitations where the souls of them that sleep in the Lord Jesus enjoy perpetual felicity," their spirits are united in nearer and purer ties, as in communion with the saints beneath the altar, they join in the solemn anthem, "How long, O Lord," as in earnest hope they wait the final benediction.

In accordance with her own humble wishes, her name and age on a little tablet is all that marks her resting-place. But in the hearts of those who loved her as a friend, and admired her as an author, is written a brighter and more enduring word of her virtues than can be traced by the pen of the biographer, or graven in the eloquence of sculptured marble.

M. L. W.

WIDOW SPRIGGINS.

WIDOW SPRIGGINS.

CHAPTER I.

"They called me blue-eyed Mary,
When frinds and fortin smiled,
But oh! how fortins vary,
I now am sorrer's child!" OLD SONG.

I WAS born in Podunk, a charmin' and sequesterated villidge on the banks of the morantic and meanderin' Mohawk. My father's name was Nathan Ruggles; he was an emigranter from Vermount, and he married a Dutch young woman by the name of Vine Hogobome, a natyve of Podunk. I was the oldest of ten childern, five boys and five gearls. The boys was Nadab and Abihu, (twins,) Cornelus, Bemas, and Gad. The gearls was Permilly, (that's me,) Mirtilly, Ketury, (that's a Dutch name,) Axy, and Vine. But I was the flower of the family. I've heern my mother tell that I was a wonderful cretur from the time I was knee high to a hop-toad. Afore I was 10 year old I knowd eny most all the primmer, and I could say them are vasses in't clean from "In Adam's fall," to "Zaccheus he did climb the tree," without missin' a word. And when I want but fourteen I knowd by heart, all that are gret long piece of poitry that John Rogers writ jest afore he was burnt to a stake.

When I was about sixteen our folks sent me to Miss Van Dusen's boarding-school to Scaticoke. She was a cousin of my mother, and whilst I was there besides lairnin' all monner of 'complishments I took a mazin' notion to readin' and red Rosabelly, and Alviry, and the Childern of the Abby all through. Well, arter stayin' there three months I went hum, and at my departer Miss Van Dusen give me the Childern of the Abby, 'cause 'twas my favoryte book and I was her favoryte puppil, — tellin' on me to read it cerfully and 'twould improve my taste and understandin' amazin'ly.

Well, I returned to the poternal ruff, and I tell ye I was a touch above the vulgar, but I'd or'to tell ye how I looked. My hair was of that lovely hue that folks calls red and novils calls auburn. Sometimes I suffered it to flow cerlessly over my alagaster sholders, and sometimes I confined it on the tip top of my head with a quill. My face was considerated imminently honsome. My figger was oncommon greaceful, and I had a gret deal of dignitude. But more 'n all that, I writ poitry of the first order, and was called the biggest genyus in Podunk. I knowd I was a touch above the vulgar, as I said afore, and so I kept myself putty scerce. I didn't let nun of the fellers come within gunshot of me tho' there want one there but what would a jumped sky high to git me, but I didn't incurridge 'em, for I was detairmined I wouldn't give my affections to nobody that didn't look like Lord Mortimer, him that the Childern of the Abby tells about, and nun of the young men in Podunk want no touch to him, for the biggest part on em was amazin' fleshy and he want. Well, a number on 'em arter a spell plukt up curridge to make up to me. There was Bonypart Buggins, a risin' farmer, he took arter

me consairnedly. One arternoon I was a sittin' under a tree in the orchard readin' in the Childern of the Abby, and I tho't I heern a noise, so I lookt up, and lo and behold 'twas Bonypart leanin' agin a stump.

"Your sarvent," says he. I gin him an all-to-pieces stiff bow, and went on continuyin' readin', — at last says he, —

"Miss Ruggles."

"Hold yer tongue," says I.

"Ye needn't be so ferce," says he.

Then I riz right up and says I, "What do ye mean by contrudin' yer pesky presence on my solitary medifications, hay? If 'twant for disgracin' this ere book I'd heave it at yer head." So he cleared out considerble skeart and never bothered me no more.

And there was another young man in our town by the name of Yokop Van Snorter, a marchant, that lived nigh by, makin' money and doin' well. There want a gearl in Podunk but what would a had him ony me, and I was the ony one he took a notion tew. But he was as fat as a hoss, and more 'n all that he had such a name 'twas enuf to dizgust me. Well, he was kinder timersome and darsent speak to me, so he writ me a "billydux," (that are's the French for loveletter,) I can't remember edjackly how 'twas suppress, ony I know he writ how't he loved me better'n sour crout or flitters, or anything on airth, and wanted me to marry him right off. Now in all the novils I'd read, nun of the young men didn't make a supposition in sich a stile, so I jist took it and writ on t'other side o'nt, —

"You gret unheerd of Dutch lubber; ye don't know how to tell a young woman the state of yer feelins, and if ye did

I wouldn't have ye nor touch to, so ye may giv up yer endevers." I sent the letter over by my little brother Gad, and that evenin' we were all a sittin' round the kitchin fire, mother a dippin' candles, Nadab and Abihu twistin' nutcakes, and Mirtilly a fryin' on 'em, Bemas and Ketury knittin', (my mother eddicated all her childern jest alike. She didn't aprove of havin' the boys do all the out-door work and the gearls all the housork, so in the arternoon the gearls went out and helpt the boys chop wood and hoe taturs, &c., and in the evenin' the boys cum in and helpt the gearls do up the chores,) but I was a readin, I never had nothin' to do with kitchinary consairns, for I reckoned and mother reckoned tew, that a young woman that had been to boardin'-school and lairnt phizziology, and triggeology, and astreology, besides paintin' and monners, shouldn't or'to do no housork, and I never read in no novil of a herowine that washed dishes and fried nutcakes, and so forth. Amandy Malviny Fitzalen didn't do't, and I was detairmined I wouldn't do't, tho' father used to jaw me about it, for he never had no sense of properiety. But I didn't think 'twas any disparagation to resist mother in supperintendin' the childern, for I reckoned 'twas quite interestin' to teach their young ideas how to fire, as Poke says, and the evenin' I speak on I'd jest ben puttin' Cornelus and Gad, and Axy and Vine, to bed in the trundle-bed, and was beseated readin' in Cecely, (a novil belongin' to a naber of ourn,) when father came in and says he to me, says he, "Milly,"—says I, "Sir!" "Come up chomber," says he, "I want to see ye a minnit." So I shot up my interestin novil with a sythe and follered my ferce and grumpy lookin' payrent. When we got up chomber he shot the door and says he, "Milly,"—says I, "Sir,"

says he, "Yer a darn fool." "Be, hay," says I, "what for?" "Why," says he, "I've been over to Van Snorter's store, and he told me all about that are mean dirty trick you've ben a sarvin' him, with tears in his eyes. If you'd a writ him a decent letter tellin' on him you couldn't marry him, it wouldn't a ben so bad; but even then you'd a ben a fool, for you'll never git sich another chance, — but to send him sich a sassy, crusty mess of stuff; why you'd or'to be flogged for't. I tell'd him if I was him I never'd speak to ye agin, — but he says he takes arter ye yit, and wants me to perswade ye to have him, and I tell ye ye'd better do't."

"What!" exclamigated I, "me have York Van Snorter? why, he don't look no more like Lord Mortimer than a back-log does! You may manure me in the most gloomiest dunjin in Podunk, — you may deny me the enfluence of the survivin' atmosphere, — you may deprive me of every gratication in life, but you will never conduce me to giv my willin' consent except agin my inclination, to be led to the Hymonian alter by a bein' I can't bestow my hull affections on, so I boseech on ye not to speak of him agin."

"Well, I don't know now," says father says he, "whether ye mean ye'll have him or not."

"No, never!" exclamigated I, "I never can be hissen!"

"You aint half-witted," says he, "them are plaguy novils you've been a diggin' at's used up what little sense ye had afore, — yer a standin' in yer own light, and I'll let ye know I aint a guayne to have ye cut up any more of yer capers."

So sayin' he went off and I begun tearin' my hair and la-

mentin' my sorrers the wost way. Putty soon Mirtilly and Ketury heern me, and they come up.

"Massy sakes!" says Mirtilly, "what's to pay?"

"Gracious!" says Ketury, "what under the sun ails ye?"

"What ails me?" says I. "Ax the ragin' oshun when its flambergasted billers rolls high what ails it? Ax the stormy sky when kivered with thunderin' clouds what ails it? but ax not me what ails me, — my woes is incomprehensible and uncombounded. I am surrounded on all sides with miseries, and attackted on every hand by distractions. A cruel and torranical father thretens me with his everlastin' vengence if I don't marry an unadmyrable Dutch josey! Oh happy Mirtilly! Oh unsofisticated Ketury! ye hant no notion of the sorrers of the most onfortinate of creturs!"

"How much she talks like a book," says Ketury.

"How much she talks like a fool," says Mirtilly, and off she went to bed. But Ketury was more feelin', and she staid a spell and tried to comfort me.

"But," says I, "leave me, Oh leave me alone in my desperation, and go and seek 'tired natur's sweet restorer.'" So Ketury went out and putty soon she cum back and brung a gret hunk of candy to me.

"Offer me no candy," jackleated I.

Says she, "Why you tell'd me to git ye something sweet to the store, and when I tell'd Van Snorter how't it was for you he wouldn't take no pay."

"Go back," says I, "misunderstandin' child, and throw it at his head." So she went, and when she cum into the store she huv it as hard as ever she could right into Van Snorter's face, and made his nose bleed. Onfortinately,

father he was in there, tho' she didn't see him, and when she huv the candy he jumped up and grabbed her afore she had time to get away, cryin' out "What do ye mean, ye little wretch?" Says she, "Permilly tell'd me to do it." So father he cum right strait home and into the chomber with a cowhide in his fist, and says he, "You'll sup sorrer, I tell ye, for that are caper of yourn." So sayin' he cum at me, but I jumped over the bed, and afore he could hit me, I got outside the door, and strapt it so 's he couldn't git out, — then I ketcht my bunnit and shawl, stuffed the Childern of the Abby in my pocket, went to father's chist and hookt his leather money puss, and was out of the house in a minnit. I see Ketury a cryin' by the gate, and says I, "Go in and tell mother that I've absquandered to the world's eend, and tell her not to have father let out in 3 hours, if she vallys my everlastin' peace of mind." So sayin' I huv my arms round Ketury and giv a partin' kiss and then "like a fair lily surcharged with tears,"* I run acrost the meadys and fields till I cum to a tavern about five miles from Podunk. I axed 'em if I mut lodge there, and they said I mought, and says I to the lonlady, "Good dame, give me a department alone by myself, for I desire to ponderate, unseen by vulger eyes, on the heft of misfortins that oppresses me."

"What is't ye want?" says the ignorant cretur.

Says I, "Giv me a room alone, and fetch me a candle, and sum ink, and sum paper, and a pen.

So she did, and I couldn't but admire to think how much my sittyation was like Amandy's when she was so druv, and arter collectin' my ideas, I writ the follerin vasses. I reckon their considerble touchin'.

---

* Childern of the Abby.

Dear me! no cretur ever had
So many dretful struggles —
No gearl was ever half so sad,
As poor Permilly Ruggles.

The cruel Mr. Ruggles druv
Away his charmin' dorter,
Jest because she couldn't love
The pesky York Van Snorter.

I won't commit self-suicide,
Because it's so unhuman;
But oh! I wish I had a died
Afore I was a woman.

Arter I'd writ this poim, thinks me, — well, what's to be did now? Arter considerin' a spell, I concludid to take the stage in the mornin' and perceed to the town of Higgins Patent, where my father had a sister livin', married to a Mr. Jorrocks, a forehanded farmer. He was dretful poor when he fust took arter aunt Huldy, and her payrents wouldn't consent to her havin' on him, so they got married unbeknown to nobody but the justice and sot right off for Higgins Patent. For a spell grandfer Ruggles wouldn't speak to her, but when uncle Jonah begun to be well to do they made all up, and went a visitin' to see each other. So in the mornin' I paid the damage, got into the stage and travilled tew days and tew nights till I arrove to Higgins Patent. When we drove up to aunt Jorrocks's door, the driver he hulloed and out run uncle Jonah rubbin' his eyes, for 'twant but 4 o'clock in the mornin'. Aunt she stuck her head out of the winder to see who'd come, and when she recognated me she was 'mazin' glad, for I never'd ben there afore, and I was a gret favoryte of hern. But they was dretful astoundered when they see I hadn't no baggidge, and when we went in the house I tell'd 'em the hull description of my leavin' hum from beginnin' to eend.

Aunt Huldy said I'd did right, and uncle Jonah said he hoped 'twas all for the best. "And now, my dear relatyves," says I, "I want to keep in a retired state of condition, and don't want no livin' cretur but you tew to know I'm here till I can send hum and git my clus," (for I hadn't nothin' but the gownd I had on with me, and that was a yeller calicer every day one.)

But I guess I've writ enuf for a chapter. In my next I'll conform ye what happened to me whilst I was a resider at Higgins Patent.

CHAPTER II.

"And while that charmin' voice I hear,
And whilst them lovely eyes I see —
Angelic maid, forever dear
To my fond bussom shalt thou be."

UNBEKNOWN.

RTER breckfust (I didn't eat much — only a few slapjacks — Amandy couldent eat much when she was in distress, no more couldn't I), arter breckfust I sot down and writ the follerin' pistle to my father:

"*Cruil but reverated father* — Your onfortinate dorter now takes her pen in hand to conform you that she is to Uncle Jorrocks's, obleejed by your uncomparelled cruilty to elope from the hum of her youthood and seek a sylum in a distant section of region. The only thing that supports me in my trials is the consolin' circumflexion that I have

did right in refusin' to unite my fate to a cretur I didn't belove and adore. As I intend to make Higgins Patent my natyve place for a spell, ye needn't suspect to see me to Podunk very soon. And I desire you to send me some money; and if you ain't as tight as the bark to a tree, you'll send me more'n there was in your old puss when I took it. It didn't much more'n pay the travellin' damage, and I want sum more for I desire to add some additions to my library. Tell my darlin' mother to put up all my wardrobes (clus), in Nadab's gret chist, and send it to me immejuntly; and arter you've did all I tell ye, ye needn't giv yerself any furder oneasiness consairnin' yer afflicted and mawl-treated but still affectionate and forgivin' dorter,

PERMILLY."

About a week arter this, (I hadn't got no letter from hum yit, mind ye) I was a settin' in my room where nobody couldent see me, and nobody only uncle and aunt didn't know I was there. Well, I was a settin' by the winder readin' in "Thaddeus of Warsaw," quite an interestin' novil of Aunt Huldy's, when I heern a knock to the front door, so I run into the square room and peeked thro' the curtin to see who 'twas, (for uncle and aunt had rid over to the town of Utica to sell butter and eggs and git sum things), so I peeked thro' the curtin and who sho'd I see standin' there but the ginteelest, tallest, elegantest young man ever I see. So I cut into my compartment and stuck my head all full of mornin' glories that growed by my winder, and then huv my white leno vail kerlessly over my shoulders, and you never see an interestiner looking beein than I was that minnit; then I went and opened the door. The minnit the young man see me he throwd up

his arms with admiration, and says he, "Ondoubtedly the inchantin' cretur I see is Miss Permilly Ruggles." "Jest so, that's my name," reiterated I. "Won't ye come in?" So in he walked, and I sot a cheer for him and he telld me that he'd ben a travellin' for his helth and stopt a spell in Podunk, and bein acquainted with the postmaster there, (Mr. Smith) he'd heern the hull of my history from him, and he said that the account Mr. Smith had giv him of my character and appearance, misfortins and pairsecutions, had made him very much consairned and interested about me. This surprised me amazinly, for I knowd Mr. Smith want no frind of mine when I was in Podunk — use to laff about me, and once I heerd he said I was a born fool. Well, the young man went on to say how't bein' in the post-office the day he left Podunk, my father cum in with a letter he was a guayne to put in the mail to me, and so he telld father how't he was a guayne right thro' Higgins Patent to git hum, and he'd carry the letter free-gratis. "So," says the young man, "I took the letter and here it is, and I don't know whether to bless or curse the minnit I agreed to be the bearer on't, as it has introduced me into the presence of an angelic cretur that mabby'll disdain me, and so be my ruination." I blushed "celestrial rosy red," and took the letter. "Oh," continuyed the charmin' stranger, layin' his hand on his heart, "perhaps you'll be surprised when I tell you that the fust sight of you has entranced and enraptured my sperit. You will be amazed to hear me confess that I, who, an hour ago, had never beheld you, am now your devoted admirer and humble suitor." So sayin', he fell down on his knees before me and grabbed hold of my hand.

"You're mistaken, young man," says I, "in thinkin'

I'd be astonished to see ye so besmitten at fust sight. I've read of sich things time and agin, but as you're a stranger to me it would be onprudent in me to purmit ye to pay your devours to me. Howsomever, I won't disencourage ye entirely, for your mouner of declarin' the state of yer feelin's has possessed me considerable in yer favor, and I'm purty sartin from your appearance you ain't no country bushwhacker; so I beseech on ye to rise."

"Fairest of created creturs," says he, "I cannot rise till you promise to reserve a leetle corner in your heart for the despairin' Philander."

Thinks me, what a beautiful name he's got. "Git up, Philander," exclamigated I, "the promise is yourn." So he riz, and then says he, "Seraphic gearl! grant me one of the flowers that decorate your head, to gaze on when alone." So I gin him a mornin' glory, and arter kissin' my lilly hand he went away syin'. As he was steppin' out, says I, "Philander, be you sure your affection won't never prove unconstant?"

Says he, "jest as sure as the vast furmament of sun, moon, and stars moves round this terrestrious globe I never will be false." So I shot the door and went up chomber to look out of the winder at him as long as I could see him, and when he got over the hill t'other side of the house he hov away the posy I giv him and he begun to laff as if he'd go off. At fust I was surprised to see him laffin' so consairnedly when he seemed to feel so bad at leavin' on me. So I watched him till he got out of sight, and he kept a laffin', and every little while he'd kick up his foot as if he was tickled, and finally I concluded he'd got a highsteric fit brung on by his overpowerin' feelins. Arter he'd made his disappearance I sot down to read

father's letter. I've got the letter yet, and this ere's the copy on't.

"GOOD FOR NOTHIN' DORTER MILLY: — You're mistaken if you think I'll giv myself any oneasiness about ye. I'm darn glad you've cleared out. To be sure I'd a ben willin' to keep ye to hum and sho'd a did well by ye if ye'd a had common sense, and acted as ye'd or' to; but you know you've giv me more trouble for the last seven year than you're woth — you haint airnt the salt to your porridge — and more'n all that you'd begun to spile Ketury, and put yer silly notions into her head. I tell ye agin, I'm glad to be rid on ye, and hope ye'll stay to Higgins Patent till ye can make up yer mind to act decent. Neighbor Cogsdill's Obadiah's guayne west next week, and he'll carry ye yer chist of duds. I'll send ye a leetle money, though you don't desarve a cent seein' ye hookt my puss, and it'll be the last ye'll git from me, for I'm peskily druv, and I've got children enuff to hum to support, without takin' care of them that runs away. Nor I aint a guayne to let ye be a burden on yer uncle nyther — ye've got to get yer own livin', and if I hear of yer idlin' away yer time I'll go and fetch ye hum and put ye in the factry to work. Yer mammy's sick — your goin' off has brung her clean down, for ugly as ye be ye'r her darlin, but sen she heerd yer to Higgins Patent she feels better — she telld me to tell sister Jorrocks to take good care on ye, and I hope she will take care on ye and train ye up and make ye stand round.

Yer daddy,

NADAB RUGGLES."

As soon as Ide red this onfeelin' communication I begun bemoanin' my sorrers consairnedly. "O! wretched me!" jackleated I, "reduced to the horrid alternatyve of workin' for a livin' here or guayne into a factry to Podunk! I'm

pairsecuted and miserable, and nothin' pervents my spirits from sinkin' into intire dispair in this tryin' hour except the cheerin' idee of my greaceful Philander." I must a looked very interestin' settin' there leanin' on my elbow, syin' and groanin', my eyes swimmin' in tears, and father's cruil pistle lyin' afore me. So I took the Childern of the Abby to comfert myself by readin' a spell, and turned to the 5th chapter cause there's a discription in 't of Lord Mortimer that's eny most ezackly like Philander, I remember it now word for word, and though my Amandy Malviny Spriggins has got the book now there aint no need of my lookin' in't, for to describe Lord Mortimer, it says,

"He was now in the glowin' prime of life — his person was strikinly eloquant, and his mouners insinniatinly pleasin' — seducin' sweetness dwelt in his smile, and his expressyve eyes could sparkle with contelligence, or beam with sensibility, and the harmony of his voice giv a charm to the elquation of his language which seldom or never failed of bein' unresistible."

Now that's jest the way Philander lookt. He was very tall, and the slimmest creetur I ever did see; his eyes was as black as two coals, and good grievous! how expressyve; his hair was black tew — black and shiny as a crow's tail; and he had gret-big whiskers; on the hull he was the facsinatinest beein I ever beheld. Be sure I'd a ben gladder if he'd a happened to seen me and fell in love with me without knowin' who I was; 'twould a ben more morantic. Ye know Lord Mortimer couldn't find out for ever so long who Amandy was, and he was eny most puzzled to pieces. But then if he did know all about me I didn't know nothin about him, who he was, nor where he cum from: so I had jest as much unsairtinty and disquietude

consairnin him as Lord Mortimer had consairnin' Amandy, and I tell ye 'twas quite interestin' to be so sittyated.

Jest then Aunt Huldy and Uncle Jonah cum hum, and I run down stairs and showd 'em father's letter. Arter they'd red it, says aunt says she,

"The consairned old hog! he's mistaken if he thinks I'm a guayne to let ye work for a livin' — so he may just hang up his fiddle — and ye needn't be nun consairned about it; ye shan't work nor touch tew."

"Oh my darlin' relatyve," says I, flingin' my arms round her and kissin' on her, "yer extrornary kindness in this gret and sad emairgency will never be blotterated from my rememberation.* But I shan't be unindustrious, for the idee of bein' manured in a factry as father thretens, is shockin' to me, so I'll retire to my compartment and ponderate for a spell, and then cum and tell ye the result of my circumflexions."

So I went into my chomber and was a wonderin' what Amandy would a did in sich a dilamby — when all of a sudding I happened to think how't when she had so much trouble with Lord Mortimer's father she went off to Scotland and kept school, and thinks me, I'll keep school tew. So I went into the kitching and sot down betooxt uncle and aunt, and I says to 'em, says I, "Dear frinds — reduced as I be to the dretful alternatyve of doing suthing for a livin' or beein' shot up in a horrid dunjin, I've concluded what occerpation I'd folly."

"What is't?" says they.

I continued, "What can be more interestin' and dignifyin' to a lovely young creetur in my distressin' circumstances than to impart construction to the risin' gineration

* Childern of the Abby.

and devil-up the youthful understandin'? so I'm detairmined to do it."

"Well, I'll be darned if I know now what ye mean," says Uncle Jonah.

"You gret coot you," says Aunt Huldy says she — "don't ye know nothin'? she means she'll teach a siminary; and now that's jest what Higgins Patent needs to make it a rael ginteel place."

"Yes," says uncle, "and Permilly's the very one to do it, for any body that knows so many big words as she does, ort-to keep a siminary — and I'll see about it right off."

Arter tea I retired to my chomber. 'Twas a despot charmin' moonshiny evenin' and I sot down by the winder, and the beauty of the prospect, and the stars, and the moonshine, and the gentle breezes that fanned my cheek, and the quiosity of natur, and the idee of my own individdyal sorrers begun to operate so on my immaggination that I was overpowered with mawlancholy, and so I sung "blue-eyed Mary," (I was a very purty singer — I be yit,) and jest as I'd got done that affectin' line where it says,

"I now am sorrer's child."

I heern somebody heave a sythe; so I looked out of the winder, and lo and behold 'twas Philander standin' about three feet from the winder.

"Enchantin' beein!" says he, "yer music has eny most annilliated me! enrapurin' tones! ravishin' strains!"

"Oh Jemmeni!" says I, "I'm sure I shall faint away. I'm so flustered seein' you here; if you'd only gone off without syin' or sayin' nothin' 'twould a ben jest like Lord

Mortimer's seein' Amandy the fust time, and hearin' of her sing unbeknown to her."

"Oh!" says he, "if his surprise and delight had a ben as gret as mine he couldent a went off without some kind of exclamigation, O Miss Ruggles, I'm a lingerin' round here to bask in the sunshine of your presence, and here's the dear flower you giv me — I've gazed on it ever sen."

"Massy!" says I, "I see ye heave it away when ye got along a-piece, and I should like to know what made ye kick up and laff so. I reckoned ye'd got the high-sterics."

"Not so," says he, "'twas a conniption-fit — I'm subject to 'em arter beein' overcome as I was when I fust see you — when I recovered I returned and pickt up this flower."

Says I, "It looks as fresh as if you'd jest pickt it off this ere vine."

"I've kept it fresh," says he, "with my tears while it was stickin' in the buttonhole nighest my heart."

"I entreat you to depart and leave me," says I; Amandy used to very often send Lord Mortimer off.

"Sweetest of maidens!" says Philander says he, "I obey your high bequest." So sayin' he vanished and disappeared, and I took my pencil and paper and writ the follerin' "stanzys by moonlight."

In my distractin' sittyation,
Obleejed from hum to wander,
I han't but jest one consolation,
And that's my dear Philander.

I never saw so sweet a swain,
So faithful and so tender —
So full of sythes, and groans, and pain,
As my own dear Philander.

And I'm detairmined while I live,
Though father tries to hender —
My heart and hand to nun I'll give
But jest my dear Philander.

If mother cried and father swore,
And other folks should slander;
If even the Dragon stood in the door
I'd stick to my Philander.

Ain't that touchin'? Arter I'd writ it I went to bed.

CHAPTER III.

"As I walk-ed out one evening fair,
For to view the fields and take the air,
I heerd a damsel syin' say,
'The youth I love is a guayne away.'"

MICHIGAN MINSTREL.

NEXT mornin' whilst we was eatin' breckfust, Uncle Jonah he says to me, says he, "Permilly."

Says I "hay?"

Says he, "I went all round last night a gittin' scholars for you and everybody was astonished when I tell'd 'em about ye, for nobody didn't know you was here, and Missis Peabody, and Missis Dickens, and Missis Jones, and Missis Doty, and Missis Higgins, (if she gits done making soap in time) and their husbands, is a coming here this arternoon to see ye."

"Oh dear!" says I, "I wish ye hadn't a went so soon for my chist han't cum, and I han't nothin' to put on."

"Well," says he, "it can't be helpt now — them are wimmin don't want to send their dorters to school to a person they han't seen, so you must jest fix up the best way you can, and do yer purtiest."

"Well," says I, "but where's my siminary to be loquated?"

"In deacon Peabody's chomber," says he, "he's got a master gret room, and we'll jest put some benches into 't, and ittle be jest the thing; and you must write an advertysement, and I'll stick it up in Doty's bar-room." So arter breckfust I went into my room and writ the follerin' advertysement:

"Miss Ruggles, racently from Podunk, bein' obligated by unrecountable misfortins to lobsquander from the hum of her childhood, and desirin' to devairt her mawlancolly mind sumhow — would conform the inhabiters of Higgins Patent, and its civinity, that she has resolved to instruct a siminary of young wimmin, or shemales, from six years old along up. Miss R. would insure the public of her complete comptitude to undertake this undertakin', and han't no doubt she'll giv gineral satisfication. Besides understandin' all the branches that's taught in any siminary she will larin 'em to paint on velvet, and to be perlite, and she don't want nobody to think she's a going to do it for money, for she dispises remoneyration, and only jest wants to teach to pervent herself from sinkin' in despair. She caliates to begin on Monday the 15th of June."

I hadn't more'n got it writ afore I heerd a racket, and I lookt out of the winder, and lo and behold, 'twas Obadiah Coggsdil — thunderin' along with a waggin load of tin pans and lanterns, &c., and as much as forty folks arter him — for tin pedlars didn't cum to Higgins Patent often

and when they did cum the folks made a gineral time on't. He stopt afore uncle Jorrockses, and all the people gathered round to egzamin' his stuff, and he was so bizzy praisin' of 'em up that I begun to be afeard he'd forgot my chist. Byme by says one on 'em,

"What ye got in this gret box?"

Says Obadiah says he, "That are's a chist of clus old Ruggleses folks sent out to their Milly; she run off without takin' anything with her, and I wouldn't a brung the plaguy thing if I hadn't a ben a frind of the old man. I tell'd 'em if I was them I wouldn't send the slut nothin', for she don't desarve to be treated no how."

You never see a madder creetur than I was that minnit — for there was some of the fust folks in the village standin' there, and says one on 'em to another one,

"Why, Squire Jones, this must be the same young woman that's a guayne to teach the siminary."

"Sure enuff, deacon;" says he, "and I say we'd better make the feller tell all about her, for he seems to know — what do you think about it, Dr. Davis?"

"Why," says he, "I think we'd or't to find out the hull, for I'm sure I don't want to send my dorter to school to a person that ain't respectable, if, she's ever so accomplished."

"No more don't I," says Squire Jones — "nor I nyther," says all the rest.

I tell ye I couldn't hold in no longer; so I stuck my head out of the winder, and says I, "Misters!" They all lookt up, and when they see me they was bethunderstruck; and I must a lookt very strikin' — had a gret big lalock stuck in my head, and my pen that I'd ben a writin' with in my hand, and I streched out the hand that had the

pen in, and laid t'other on my heart, and was jest a guayne to begin when Obadiah he see me and says he,

"Golly! Miss Ruggles, is that you? well, I've fetched yer old chist" —

What else he signed to say I don't know, for Dr. Davis took holt on him and shook him and says he,

"Stop yer yaw-hawin; don't ye see the lady's guayne to speak."

So he stopt and I begun agin, and addrested 'em as follers: "Gentlemen — as ye don't know nothin' consairnin' me only what you've heern from this ere ignorant creetur, I spose you must intertain straunge idees about me; but if you knowd what I've underwent to hum — if you knowd my afflictions and mawltreatment, you wouldn't blame me nun for lobsquanderin', nor ye wouldn't listin a minnit to the agrogious disrepresentations this villing promulgates, and if you'll call on me this arternoon I'll tell ye the hull of my history from eend to eend."

So they convairsed together a spell and then Dr. Davis he stept out from the middle on 'em, and says he,

"We'll do ourselves the honor of calling on Miss Ruggles this arternoon."

So sayin' he hysted his hat and made a low bow, and I made a curchy, and the men they went hum, but I obsairved Dr. Davis look back at me in admireation, and I knowd he was besmitten at fust sight; but thinks me, it won't do to incurridge him, for my affections is unrecoverably gin to another; (Dr. Davis was a widdyer, a very nice, smart man — very much set by — and an oncommon good physicianer too.) Well, Uncle Jonah he went out and brung in my chist, and then I read my advertysement to him and his wife, and they said 'twas fust rate, and uncle

he telld me to write four or five on 'em to stick up in the towns round there. So I did — and when I'd got 'em writ I reckoned twas time to habiliate myself for the company that was a comin' to see me, so I onlocked my chist, and took out a white dimity with a long short with a blue ribbin' round the botton on't, and put it on, and tied a red sash round my waist; then I took and tied a yaller ribbin round my head and stuck a number of mornin' glories in it; then I huv a pink silk long shawl round my neck, and my twilight was completed. So you see I didn't depart from the elegant simplicity always conspicious in my dress. Arter dinner I went and sot down in the square room and purty soon I heerd a master loud talkin' — so I looked out, and 'twas Dickens, and Jones, and Peabody, and Doty, and their wives, and Dr. Davis, a comin' up the hill; so I fixed myself in a reclinin' poster, and took the Childern of the Abby and begun readin'. Purty soon they knockt, and Aunt Huldy she hollered, "Walk in" — so in they all cum, and aunt she introduced us, and the gentlemen made bows, and the ladies and me, we made curchys to one another, and we all said we hoped for better acquaintence. Arter talkin' about the weather a spell, says Missis Peabody says she,

"So you're a guayne to set up siminary, hay?"

"I sign to," says I, "if I can git patternage."

Says Missis Dickens says she, "we've all agreed to send our dorters to ye, but we've heern ruther an onfavorable account on ye from a tin pedlar from your place."

Says Deacon Peabody says he, "my wife and I we thot" — says Missis Peabody, interruptin' of him — "I telld Mr. Peabody that seein' you was a guayne to teach in our chomber if you was raly sich an obstropelous young

woman as the pedlar tell'd for — 'twould bring reproach on our house, and Mr. Peabody's ben deacon risin' 20 year, and has always been lookt up to by the hull town, so says I, Deacon, I guess we'll go and larn the truth on't."

Says Deacon Peabody says he, "I says to Missis Peabody, says I, it looks kinder suspicious."

"No, you didn't," says she, "'twas me said it to you — says I, Deacon, says I, it seems to me it looks kinder suspicious for a young woman to come here and keep herself so scerce for more'n a week. I reckon we'd or't to know more about her afore we giv her our chomber to teach in." So they kept on continuyin' talkin' for ever so long, and at last says Dr. Davis says he,

"We cum for the purpose of hearin' Miss Ruggleses explanigation, and if the ladies can cum to a ceesation for a spell, we'll listen to her."

So I with my eyes cast down — my face diffused with blushes — with a mournful sythe, begun:

"My Friends: — My history is uncomboundably misfortinate. I concurred the displeasure of a cruel and torranical father, by bein' unwillin' to unite my destination with a creetur I couldn't belove, for I couldn't experience for him the uncontrolable affection that is desirable to render the mattermonial state agreeable, and I'd cum to a detairmination not to have nobody that want as pleasin' and elegant as Lord Mortimer, the young man this ere charmin' book tells about, (here I took and kist the Childern of the Abby,) and he want no more like him than a punkin's like a potater, and you will sairtinly compatigate my sorrers when I conform you that my unfeelin' parent even thretened to confound me in a gloomy dungin if I

didn't obey his onreasonable command; and who, I ax, wouldn't, when circumstances arrove to sich a pitch — who wouldn't, if she'd the least jot of sensibility — who wouldn't elop from the paternal ruff, and seek a sylum in a distant land? Alas!" says I, raisin' my eyes swimmin' in tears, and layin' my hand on my bustin' heart — "I lobsquandered to this place, hopin' to spend my time in unbeknown sequestration — intendin' to wander in these inspirin' woods, givin' ritteration to my woes in poetry — for I write poetry. But even here I couldn't be let alone, for I've jist received from my father a pistle charged with a mandrake to make me go to work immejuntly, or else he'll remander me back to that dretful dunjin I've jest escaped; and as I don't desire to employ my fair hands in wroughtin' at sairvyle labor, I thought, seein' I was intirely qualificient, I'd teach a simminary."

All the while I was makin' this speech ye never see a surprisder lookin' set of folks than them I was addressin' — and for a spell arter I'd done there wan't a word spoke — and Dr. Davis he seemed to be wonderfully affected, for he turned his face round and lookt out the winder all the time. At last says Deacon Peabody says he,

"Well, I never heerd sich a master sight of crooked words in my day. I rather guess my dorter han't no casion to lairn sich stuff." I s'pose Missis Peabody was a waitin' to see what opinion the deacon would ixpress so 's to have hern conterary to it, for she broke right in and says she,

"I ruther guess, mister Deacon Peabody, ittle be as I say. My Mirandy shall go to this ere young woman's school, for I never heerd nobody use eleganter language in my life, so you may shet yer head."

I tell ye the deacon did shet up his head and lookt as if he wished he hadn't opened it. As soon as Missis Peabody ixprest her mind the rest of the wimmin up and agreed with her, and it was purty ivident that she was the rulin' woman in Higgins Patent. They all on 'em said they'd patternise me, and the men they lookt purty grumpy, but they darsent say a word.

Arter a spell, says Deacon P. says he, "I guess we'd better be goin'."

"Well, I guess I ain't a guayne to be in no hurry," says his wife, "you may go as soon as you please, tho'."

"So may you," says Missis Dickens to her husband.

"So may you," says Missis Doty to hern.

"So may you," says Missis Jones to the squire, and so the men folks went off, and the wimmin stayed. "Now do take off yer things and stay to tea," says Aunt Huldy.

"Well, I didn't cum to stay," says Missis Peabody.

"Nor I nyther," says Missis Dickens.

"Me nyther," says Missis Jones.

"No more didn't I," says Missis Doty.

"But I don't know but I'll stay," says Missis Peabody.

"Well, I guess I will," says all the others.

So they took off their things, and purty soon every one on 'em hawled out their nittin' work, and I tell ye, they want nun on 'em slow to talk — but I can't spend time to tell about their visit. In the evenin' arter they'd all gone, I went out to take a walk, and as I went by the housen everybody cum to the doors and winders to look at me, and when I past by Dr. Davises office I see him a peekin' out, and I pitied him amazinly, for I see he was despotly took with me — and thinks me, I'd ort to let him know right off that his case is hopeless. So I went into the

woods and took my pencil and paper and writ the follerin' billet:

"RESPECTABLE DOCTOR:—It is with compunctious distress that I conform you I never can be yourn—my affections is gin, incondubitably gin to another—I'm plighted to Philander—try to forgit me I boseech on ye—may that peace and happiness you so truly desairve to possess be yourn—and may they never agin meet with sich conterruptions as they have received from the unable but pittyin'*

"PERMILLY RUGGLES."

When I'd writ it I went and huv it into his office winder, and then I went back into the woods to ponderate. So I sot down on a log under a tree, and whilst I was a thinkin' I heerd sumbody sythe, and I lookt round and, lo and behold, 'twas Philander leanin' agin a tree with his honkercher up to his eyes. So I goes up to him and says I, takin' hold of his hand, "Philander, why so mawlancolly?"

"Alas!" says he, "lovliest of created bein's, I must leave you."

"Leave me!" says I, "I shall sairtin faint away; do ketch me!" So he led me to a log, and I sot down, and says he, "Compose yerself, my anngel."

Arter a spell says I, "I've composed myself, now perceed."

And says he, "I'm obleejed to depart."

And says I, "Don't for massy's sake tell me where yer a guayne,—for 'twont be half so interestin' as 'twill to be in onsairtinty consairnin ye."

* Childern of the Abby, chap. 17.

"Well then," says he, "let me jest tell ye we must part for a number of months, — perhaps a year, — and oh! my charmer! can you remember me?"

"Gracious!" jackleated I, "don't ye know yer Permilly's heart is oncapable of bein' faithless?"

"I can't doubt it," says he, "but it's enuff to split my heart, — it's like cuttin' me into inch pieces to bid ye farewell! but it must be so." So he prest me to his bussom and went groanin' off; but afore he'd got fur I happened to think and says I, "Stop a minnit, Philander, don't ye know when Lord Mortimer went away he gin Amandy his picter, and I want yourn."

"Alas!" says he, "I han't nun; but I can make one in a minnit." So he took a piece of paper out of his pocket, and took my pencil and drawd a head on't and gin it to me.

"Why," says I, "that don't look nun like you."

"Yes, it does," says he, "it's exact, — you'll see by daylight." So I took it, and then arter takin' another farewell he departed, and I sunk down on the log overpowered. But then I was comforted in thinkin' how much our partin' was like Lord Mortimer's and Amandy's — so sudding — and how much they underwent when they was apart, and how it did seem as if they never would meet agin; and thinks me, mabby ittle be jest so with us, — no knowin' — but any how it's to be expected. I'll take on while he's gone, — so arter sheddin' a cropious flood of tears, I writ the follerin stanzys:

He's gone, I'm sure I don't know where,
Nor when he'll come agin;
And there's no tellin' what dispair
My droopin' heart is in!

And I dear me sus! when we're apart
If he forgits Permilly,
'Twill sairtin break her lovin' heart,
And make her brain grow chilly.

Murder! can he be false to me?
I'd kill me if he should —
But no! I guess he'll constant be,
Because he vowed he would.

But goody gracious! what shall I
Do when he's gone away?
On this ere log I'll sit and cry,
And sythe and groan I say.

When I'd got this poitry writ the moon was a shinin', and I reckoned it must be purty late, so I went hum, and when I went by Dr. Davises office I heerd him a talkin' and laffin consairnedly with sumbody that sounded jest like Philander, — but I'd no idee 'twas Philander — for he felt too distresst to laff, and I reckoned the doctor hadn't found my billet yet, for if he had he couldn't a felt so cherful.

Arter this there want nothin' worth relatin' took place in several days till I begun my school, — only I writ the follerin' epigranny one night whilst I was a gazin' on the minnyture of my absent Philander:

He feared that I'd forget him quite,
As soon as he got out of sight —
He wouldn't think me so vile
If he should see me ev'ry night
By moonshine or by candle light,
A lookin' at his profyle.

CHAPTER IV.

"'Tis eddycation forms the common mind,
Jest as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

ENGLISH READER.

AS soon as Aurory had opened the porticos of the horizon, the fair Permilly ariz and arranged her attire — for 'twas the momentuous mornin' that her siminary was guayne to begin. I put on a yaller streeked open gownd with a flounce round it, and a long green sash round my waist, and a blue crape turbin on my head, with one long black ostridge feather stuck in it, then I put my pink silk long shawl round my neck, and then condescended down into the breckfust room.

Arter breckfust Uncle Jonah he gin me his watch, sayin' I'd need a time-piece in school. 'Twas an extrornary gret silver watch — don't see no sich big watches now-days. So I tied it to a red ribbin and hung it round my neck, and 'twas so big I couldn't stuff it under my sash, so I let it hang outside. Bein' all ready for a start I happened to think how't I or'to carry Philander's picter with me all the time, and what to do I dident know, for I was afeard 'twould get rubbed out. So I went to Uncle Jonah and axed him if he hadn't sum kind of a small flat box he could lend me (didn't tell him what I wanted on't — hadn't said a word to him nor Aunt Huldy about Philander). So he went to his chist and hawled out a tin to-

baccer box with a snap to it and axed me if 'twould do. "That are's the very thing." So I put the picter in't, and jammed it under my sash, and took my parrysol and set out for school, and as I went by the housen 'twas curus to see the folks peekin' out and exclaimin', "There goes the new school-marm. Did you ever!" and sich like.

Well, I cum to the deacon's and Missis Peabody she cum to the door and showed me the way into the school-room, and you never heerd sich a racket as there was there afore I went in, but as soon as they see me they was as still as mice. There was about thirty gearls there, and a number cum in arter I did, so't I had forty-seven in the hull, and sum on 'em was purty big; so I made the big ones set on one side and the leetle ones on 'tother side, and arter I'd got 'em all arranged, says I, "Siminary's begun:" and then I made 'em read round in the English Reader. Arter they'd read, I axed 'em if they'd ever syphered, and they all said "No." So I tell'd 'em to take their slates, and I was surprised to find out that more'n half on 'em couldn't make figgers — so I tell'd 'em to take the rethmetic and copy 'em out on't.

"Now," says I, "make one side of yer slates jest as full of figgers as ittle hold." So they did; and then says Mirandy Peabody says she, "What shall we do next?"

"Don't ye know nothin'?" says I, "make t'other side full." So they did: and then says Mirandy, "What next?"

"Rub 'em out," says I, "and put up yer slates; ye've syphered enuff for one day; the big ones may go out whilst I hear the little ones spell," (for spellin' I always tho't was the most importinate part of eddycation:) so I made the little gearls stand up in a row, and I took a spellin' book in one hand and a switch in t'other, and says I,

"Now the fust one that misses shall be whipt and go to the foot."

"Well," says Drusilly Doty, says she, "what will be did to me if I miss?" (she was to the foot.)

"Nun of yer sarce," says I. Well the fust time round they all spelt right but Philandy Dickens, and I did as I said I would to her. Next time round I put out "grub," to Hepsy Hawkins; she was to the head, and says she, "g-r-w-eb, grub."

"There aint no sich letter as 'eb,'" says I, "go down to the foot." So she started and run as fast as ever she could so's I couldn't git a chance to whip her. "Now, Hepsy Hawkins," says I, "to pay for that are trick of your'n you shall always be in a class by yerself."

"Good!" says she, "then I shall always be at the head."

"Go long and set on the floor under the table," says I. So she went and then I put it out to Bricy Stokes and she spelt it right. "Now," says I, "what's the meaning on't?" Bricy couldn't tell, nor nun of the rest on 'em. So says I, "What eats up the cabbages?"

"Why, folks," says Ritty Rickets.

"Well," says I, "what eats 'em up when they're growin' in the garding?"

Says she, "The critters gits in and eat 'em sumtimes."

"Don't ye know nothin'?" says I, "why worms eats 'em and worms is grubs."

"Now," says Melissy Peabody, "I know what for father says every day how't we're all worms — it's cause we eat sich a master sight of cabbages."

"Set down," says I, "every one on ye; ye talk so

much there an't no sich thing as hearin' on ye spell." Arter a spell I tell'd 'em they might go out and send the big ones in. So they run hollerin' and yellin' and tearin' down stairs, and it did seem as if the hull house would cum down. Thinks me, I'll fix 'em for that. Purty soon Hepsy Hawkins — she't was under the table — says to me:

"Miss Ruggles, maytent I go out?"

"No, ye maytent," says I.

"I'm sorry I was sassy," says she, "I won't be never agin if ye'll lemme go out."

"Well, go," says I. Whilst she was guayne, says I, "Ye'll never be sassy agin, *hay?*"

"No, *straw*," says she, and cut out of the door. Thinks me, she'll git it! Well, the big gearls cum in and I axed 'em if they'd ever studied grommer. Most on 'em said they had sum. "Well," says I, "it's best to be pairfect in't; and seein' you've studied sum afore, ye may lairn half way through at once so's to git done quick and go to parsin'." So they went to studyin' and I went to the door and call'd the little ones in, and arter I'd holler'd to 'em I went behind the door and as fast as each one cum in I hit her a cuff, and when Hepsy Hawkins cum in I took and slung her round and round, and made her go back under the table. Well, they all yell'd and bellered like split; you never heerd sich a racket, I'm sartin. Purty soon I lookt at my watch and see 'twas time to let out, so I tell'd 'em they might go hum, and they all went only jest about a dozen that brung their dinners; I'd brung mine tew — for 'twas most a mild to Uncle Jorrockses — so I took it out of my undispensible and eat it. It subsisted of two slices of bread and butter stuck together, a

hunk of cheese, a pickle, and an apple turnover. That was all the dinner I took, for I never had no great of an appetite — bein' like Amandy, ye know she only took sum "slight refreshments" — and whilst I was eatin' thinks me, I wonder if Amandy had sich a tussle gittin' along with her school as I do; I'll look into the Childern of the Abby when I get hum and see, for I've eny most forgot; my memory's ruther forgitful sumtimes, but O! I never shall forgit my Philander. So I took out my tobaccer box and lookt at him. Arter "gazin' on't with agonizin' tenderness"* for a spell, and syin' and groanin' and kissin' on't, I put it back, and I see all the gearls a whisperin' and wonderin'; so says I to 'em:

"O gearls! the belovedest and vallyablest thing I've got is in this ere box."

"What is it?" says they, "and what makes ye cry and groan over it so?"

"Ax me no questions," says I, "I don't desire to dispose confidence in nobody."

Well, purty soon the scholars all cum in and I begun school. Then I made the little ones all take their sowin', only Hepsy Hawkins and sent her under the table agin, and she went without makin' a speck of fuss. I see she had sumthin' under her apern and I axed her what 'twas, and she said 'twas her spellin'-book. Well, I sot the little gearls to sowin'; sum on 'em had pieces of calicer to make bed-kivers on, and sum on 'em had cloth to lairn to mark letters and make birds and trees on. Then I heerd the big ones recite in grommer, and they kept a stoppin' for me to ax 'em questions, but says I, "That an't no way;

---

* Childern of the Abby, chap. 17.

ye must begin to the beginnin' of yer lesson, and say clean to the eend on't without stoppin' once." So they tried; but they made blunderin' work on't — I had to keep tellin' on 'em all the time what cum next, and when they got into cases it cum Sophire Joneses turn and she'd forgot what cum next. So says I, "Nammi, Possmine, Objine." Says Sally Ann Higgins, says she, "Miss Ruggles, what's the meanin' of them are words? they're master queer!"

Says I, "Miss Sally Ann Higgins, I guess ye ha'n't ben under very good deseplyne in the schools ye've ben to afore yit, or ye wouldn't darst to ax yer school-marm questions, and sich questions! want to know what's the meanin' of Nommi, Possmine' Objine! Why, its grommer — that's the meanin' on't — so shet yer head."

When they'd got done sayin' grommer I tell'd 'em they might paint the rest of the arternoon. So they took out their velvet and paints and cum to I'd forgot my picters — so I sent Ann Mariar Dodge down arter 'em and when she cum back I tho't I'd give 'em Nomy and Ruth for the fust lesson. So I stuck it up agin the wall and helpt 'em cut out the theorims, and they begun, and sum on 'em done very well, but sum made dretful work, 'specially about the artificial flowers and fethers on Ruth's bunnit, and sum on 'em made Nomy's 'nittin'-work look as if all the stitches was dropt. Byme-by I tell'd 'em to put up their paintin' and sowin' and put on their things, for 'twas time to let out school, — so they did. Then I tell'd 'em to stand up in a row all round the edge of the room. "Now," says I, "clasp yer hands acrost yer waists as I do — now make yer monners as I do." Then I made a low curchy, and they all did jest as I did. "Now," says I, "I shall sus-

pect ye to make yer monners every arternoon when school's out without my showin' of ye, how — Siminary's out." So they all went hum only Hepsy Hawkins — I made her stay a spell arter. So I slickt up my table, and then I call'd Hepsy Hawkins out and says I,

"Be ye sorry for disbehavin' so to-day!" Says she, "Yis, marm."

Says I, "Won't ye never misconduct so agin?"

"No, marm," says she. "Well then ye may go hum," says I. So she ketched her bunnit in less than no time and run off hum. Then I took my parrysol and walked off humwards with the greatest deliberosity and dignitude for I reckon a school-marm can't be tew dignified. Whilst I was a guayne along every body lookt out of the winder and lafft, and I met a hull grist of boys guayne hum from deestrict school, and they hoorawed and clapt their hands. Thinks me, I wonder if this ere's the way they suppress their admireation to Higgins Patent. At last when I was eny most hum I met a young man descendin' up the hill — he had yaller hair, and a gret red face and snuff-colored clus on and a slate under his arm. Well, he stared at me and jest as I'd got along by says he, "Marm!"

Says I, "Hay!"

Says he, "Did you know there's a dead critter tied to your sash?"

"Gracious!" says I, "you don't say so." So he stept up and took it off for me and as true as natur' 'twas an old dried-up dead hen, and I knowd in a minnit that Hepsy Hawkins had did it while I was a fixin' my table. I never in my hull life had anything happen to me that made me feel so bad as that are did; so I jest sot down on the hill and begun to cry.

"Don't take on so," says the strannger, "sich mean tricks hurts them as does 'em more'n them they're did to. I wouldn't worry about it, young woman."

"O! dear me suz!" says I, "if Amandy had ever had a dead hen tied to her I wouldn't care — but there aint nothin' in the hull of the Childern of the Abby about a hen nor any other thing bein' tied to her, tho' she had all kinds of trouble besides; but goody grevous! my sorrers is bigger than hern."

"Well, I don't know nothin' about Amandy," says he.

"What!" says I, "you hant read the Childern of the Abby!"

"No, I han't," says he.

"Well," says I, "it's time ye did then, and I'll lend it to ye, for I feel extrornary obleejed to ye for the sairvice ye've did me, and ye'll have my everlastin' gratitution for't." So sayin' I waved my hand for him to go — but he didn't seem to take the hint, so says I, "Don't you apprehend that are motion?"

"No, I don't," says he.

"Well," says I, "'twas the same as tellin' of ye to make yer disappearance." "'Twas, hay?" says he, "well, I should like to be better acquainted, marm."

"Well," says I, "you can have the felickity of seein' me by callin' to Mr. Jorrockses, — for I shall always estimate ye for disbegagin' of me from that are consairned old carcass — but frindship is all I can profferate ye."

"Well, I'll cum there," says he. Then I waved my hand to him agin, and he understood that time; so he went off. Well, I got hum, and Aunt Huldy she axed me how I got along teachin'. "O grandfer grevous!" says I, "I never had so much trouble in one day in my life."

"Didn't!" says she,

"No, didn't!" says I. So I tell'd her the hull, and says she, "As for that are hen I shouldn't care tew cents about it, don't let it giv ye no trouble, darlin'."

"Thank ye, beloved aunt," says I, "sympathy is sweet in the most deepest affliction." Arter tea I thought I'd take a walk; so I took my pencil and paper and a shingle to write on, and winded my way to the very undentical spot where I parted with Philander, and sittin' down on a log I writ the follerin' vairses:

'Twas here I parted with Philander,
Thro' the wide world he's gone to wander,
Six times the mornin' sun has rizen
Sen I beheld that face of hisn.

I've scerce ben able for to speak
Thro' all this mawlancholly week,
And sairtin nobody would wonder,
If they should only see Philander.

So tall, so slender, and so straight,
So very kerless in his gait —
His hair is black — his hands is white —
His voice is sweet — his eyes is bright.

The sorrers I indure; Good Landy!
Are like the sorrers of Amandy.
But whilst I'm blest with sich a beau,
I'm willin' for to suffer woe.

But whilst he's gone what shall I do?
Dear suz! how shall I live it through?
If all the world was mine I'd gin it
To see my darlin' half a minnit.

Six times the mornin' sun has rizen
Sen I beheld that face of hisn —
And here each night I'll cum and cry,
I hope we'll meet agin byme-by.

Arter I'd writ it I went hum and Aunt Huldy tell'd me that Missis Wilkins had sent her and me an invitation to cum to her house the next evenin' to a party.

"I'll go if you do," says I.

"Well, I shall go sartin," says she, "for Widder Wilkins haint never invited me there afore. She haint lived to Higgins Patent but 2 or 3 year, and haint took much notice of the wimmin here. I always reckoned she felt above us 'cause she's rich and lives purty grand; but mabby she don't."

Well, bed time cum and I retired to my couch of repose and fell into a gentle and survivin' slumber and next mornin' I woke up revigorated and went to my siminary. Things progranced about as they did the day afore, only Hepsy Hawkins dident cum, and Mirandy Peabody said how't Missis Hawkins said she couldn't cum no more 'cause I was partial. I tell ye she'd a got a peelin' if she had a cum.

CHAPTER V.

"She sent him word she couldn't wed,
He heard the tale and reason fled."

UNBEKNOWN.

And when at last his mind got right,
He went and married out of spite.

ADDITION BY ME.

THE second day I kept school as I was a windin' my way hum I set down under a tree to look at Philander's pictur. And whilst I was a syin' and groanin' over it, lo and behold, the same young man I see the day afore cum along with his slate under his arm and more'n a hundred boys arter him, cuffin' and fightin' and throwin' stuns. When the young man see me, says he, "Yer sarvent, marm."

I bowed to him putty stiff, and he cum right up and sot down aside of me, and, says he, —

"Seems to me ye look mawlancolly, young woman; hope ye haint had no more trouble to-day."

"Mister," jackleated I, "I beseated myself in this ere solitary spot to medificate alone, and gaze a spell in rapter on this dear tresher, the ony thing that perduces me any satisfaction, and I don't desire to be contruded upon, so I intreat ye to go off, and whilst you'r about it, jest knock over ten or a dozen of them are boys," (there was a mess of the little wretches got on top of the hill and stood there

a yellin' at me, "coo-coo-doodle-doo, cluck-cluck-cla-cluck."

"Well," says he, "if ye'll show me that are treshure, as ye call it, I'll clear out." So I handid him the toback-er box, and arter lookin' at it a minnit, says he, "I swan-ny! I don't wonder ye cry when ye look at it, for it's the consairnedest lookin' thing ever I see. What in natur' do ye keep it for?"

I grabbd the box and riz up without sayin' a word, and walked off indignatious.

"Curus cretur, by golly," says the young man; then he ketcht up a club and took arter the boys, and they all run hootin' and bellerin' down the hill, and I didn't see no more on 'em. When I arrove to hum I found Aunt Huldy beginnin' to rigg for the party, so I begun to fix tew. And I'll tell ye how I drest; I reckon I never lookt equal to what I did that evenin', in my life. I put on a white spencer with short sleeves and blue ribbins tied round the bottom on 'em, which counterasted finely with my snowy arms; then I wore a yaller canton crape skeart with red ribbin loopt up all round the bottom on't, and a pink sash round my waist. My hair was quirld up on the tip-top of my head, and confined with a dretful high-toppt comb, (I've got it now,) and was jest a guayne to put my artifishel wreath on my head, when thinks me, I wonder how Amandy 'd a fixed her head on sich a casion. So I took the Childern of the Abby and red where it tells about her guayne to Missis Kilcorban's ball, and I found she had on a turbin with sum fethers in't. So I took my green shawl with sprangles all over it and wound it round and round my head, and stuck six black ostridge fethers in't. Then thinks me, I must put a chain to Philander's picter,

as Amandy used to have to her mother's — (wonder she didn't wear Lord Mortimer's, but I s'pose 'twas so big she couldent.) So I took a string of glass beads as big as bullets, and all the different colors ever ye see, and fastened the box to it and hung it round my alagaster neck. Jest as Ide finished habiliatin, Aunt Huldy cum in, and says I, "Aint ye struck with my surpassin' lovliness?"

"Yis, I be," says she; "I never see ye look so putty; but how do I look?"

"As well as could be expected," anserd I, "from a woman that's past the moridion of youthful facksination."

"Well, cum on then, if yer ready," says she; "but we must eat suthin afore we go, tho' I haint no doubt Missis Wilkins 'll have enuff stuff to eat." So we went into the kitching and aunt and uncle eat 3 or 4 bowls full of buttermilk pop, but I dident eat but a little mite. Then I put on my montle to kiver my clus, so's the folks wouldn't be starin' at my unresistable elegance along the road, and huv my leno vail over my head and we sot off. Well, we got to the place of "rendyvows," and Aunt Huldy and a hull grist of wimmin that cum in just behind us went into the dressin'-room to take off their things, but I sot down by a winder in the hall, and when the wimmin cum out to be rushered into the parlor, Aunt Huldy she spied me and says she, "Why don't ye take off yer montle and cum along?"

"Cause nater," says I.

"Why," says she, "they'll think queer on't."

"I don't ker if they do," says I; "I don't want to go in when everybody else does; besides, I want to set here and ponderate a spell afore I plunge into the giddy whirlfool of fluctuation, where there aint no bussom to partickipate in my sorrers — nun but cold-hearted strangers; and

my belovedest fur away! O let me be!" So she went in and I was left alone to my solemcolly rumirations. Arter settin' there a spell I heerd a noise, and purty soon some folks begun to condescend — and says one,

"O doctor, I'm half frightend to death!" and says another, "I'm skairt tew." The door stood on a jar and they pusht it open and went in. Arter they'd shet the door thinks me, it's time for me to make my debutte. So I took off my montle, agested my fethers, and so forth, and opend the door, and lo and behold, the minister was a prayin' — thinks me, I wonder if they always begin their parties here with prayin'; but I dident ker. So I recoverd my composher, and with my natral elegance walkt up the room,* and there was a gineral buz of admireation as I stept along, and seein' a sofy at the upper eend of the room and a row of folks standin' up afore it I went along and squoze into one eend on't. Missis Wilkins was standin' nigh by and she reacht out and gin me a twitch and says she, "Miss Ruggles, you've got the bridesmaid's seat."

"The dragon!" says I — and I gin a spring and jumpt clear into the middle of the room, and everybody stared at me to kill. I tell ye I was considerable flustrated. So I sot down in a cheer and put my fan up afore my face, and I guess I kept it there a spell. Byme by the minister got done prayin' and begun marryin' of 'em and thinks me, I'll giv a look and see who 'tis. So I lookt up and my wonderation can be better imagginated than discribed, when I see Dr. Davis a standin' there holdin' holt of Mary Ann Wilkinses hand! Never in my born days was I half supprised as I was that minnit; but I knowd that Davis

*Children of the Abby, chap. 20.

had jest did it out of spite cause I wouldent have him. There was tew bridesmaids and tew groomsmen, but I dident know ary one on 'em — but one of the groomsmen lookt eny most egzactly like Philander, ony he hadent no whiskers. Purty soon the serrymony was over, and they begun to lead up the folks to kiss Mary Ann, and jest then sumbody gin me a hunch on my elbow, and I lookt, and lo and behold, 'twas the yaller-headed young man that ontied the dead hen, and thinks me, he's a takin' arter me jest as Sir Charles Bingley did arter Amandy, and I must treat him decent as she did him — tho' I can't incurridge him.

"Good evenin' to ye, Miss Ruggles," says he.

"Good evenin', Sir Charles," says I.

"Golly!" says he, "that aint my name."

"Aint, hay?" says I.

"No!" says he, "my name's Jabez Spriggins — I teach the deestreckt school up here."

"Do, hay?" says I.

"You look amazin' honsome to-night," continuyd he.

"O law!" says I, "mabby you think so; and you don't look much as ye did this arternoon." No more he dident — he had on a long tailed pepper and salt summer coat, thunder and lightnin' jackit, and streeked trowsers. Then he had sich a master wide ruffle to his shirt with a wonderful big breast-pin stuck on't — and his hair was tallered as stiff as all nater, and hysted up to a peak afore much as a foot high. He raly lookt surprisin' well.

"Now," says I, "I wish you'd tell me who that are is that looks so much like Philander?"

"I don't know who ye mean," says he.

"Well," says I, "who's that are feller that's leadin' up Californy Coon?"

Says he, "That's Dick Johnson, he goes to Hamilton Collidge. His payrents lives to the eastard, and he's ben hum spendin' the vocation. He stopt here on his way back to collidge so's to be groomsman — he's a purty wild chap. That are short feller that's leadin' up Lorindy Rickets is Bill Johnson, another collidge feller, and that are one with curly hair is Sam Wilkins, the bride's brother — he's mighty perlite to Grashioshy Hawkins, but he keeps a lookin' at you neverstandin'."

"Well," says I, "I wish you'd introduct me to Johnson, for he looks so much like Philander I want to get acquaintid with him."

"Who in the name o' nater is Philander?" says Spriggins, says he.

"This ere's him," says I, hawlin' out the tobacker box. But whilst I was a hawlin' it out the string broke and the box rolld right in amonkst a mess of folks that was a standin' round the bride.

"Hullo!" says Loisy Hocus, "suthin' cum buntin' agin my foot." I jumpt up and run, Spriggins he follerd, but afore I could git it Josh Jones (Dr. Davises student, a rael mean feller) pickt it up.

"Here — giv that are up!" says I, "it's mine."

"Giv that are up," says Spriggins, "it's Miss Ruggleses."

"Good landy!" says Missis Hawkins, "I want to know if you chaw tobacker?"

"No, I don't," anserd I, "that are box has got a treshur in't, so jest gin it up."

"Do for grammany's sake open it and see what's in't," says Missis Hawkins, (she spited me on account of the chastigation I gin Hepsy.) So Jones he hawld it out and

begun to holler and laff at it and was jest a guayne to hand it round when Johnson he ketcht it away from him and without ever lookin' at it gin it to me.

"Ten thousand million thanks," jackleated I, "I might a knowd that anybody that lookt so much like Philander in face and figger couldent help resemblin' of him in noblitude of mind." Johnson's face turnd as red as fire. I spose he felt dashed to be praised up by sich an interestin' bein' as I was.

"Now," says I, "I wish sumbody'd recoverate my box."

So Johnson he rummaged round and found it and gin it to me, and I put the profyle into't and stufft it under my sash, and went and sot down in a cheer at the furder eend of the room. Purty soon Spriggins cum up with the three fellers and says he,

"I've brung these ere young men for to introduct 'em to ye — this ere's Mr. Johnson, Miss Ruggles — this ere's Mr. Tomson, and this ere's Mr. Wilkins."

"Yer sairvent, gentlemen," says I, rizin' and makin' a low curchy.

"Have you ben up to slute the bride!" says Johnson.

"No," says I, "I guess taint best — ittle ony make the doctor feel bad." So they all drawd up cheers and sot down round me. "Don't be supprised Mr. Johnson," says I, "if I stare at ye considerable, for you do look amazinly like sumbody I know."

"O stare as much as ye please," says he, "I like to be lookt at by the ladies."

"O my conscience!" says Tomson, "I'd giv all my old shoes to obtain sich a felickity as Johnson enjoys under the sunbeams of them electrifyin' gorbs!"

"So would I," says Wilkins, syin'.

Jest then the cake and stuff cum round to me and Johnson took off a gret hunk and put it on a plate and gin it to me.

"Grandfather grievous!" says I, "you don't suspect me to eat all that are, I hope."

"To be sure," says he.

"Why lay to't," says Spriggins, "'twon't hurt ye nun."

"I shan't do't," says I, "I don't scerce ever eat anything, and han't no casion now."

"Well, you'll take sum of the egg-nogg, won't ye!" says Spriggins, hollerin' at the same time to a nigger wench that was carryin' round a server full of suthin' to drink.

"These ere timbles aint full enuff," says Spriggins, so he emptied tew on 'em together and handed it to me. Everybody in the room was lookin' at us — pertickleely at me. So says I, purty loud, "I tell ye I hant no casion." Uncle Jonah he was clear acrost the room and he hollered out,

"Don't tease Milly to let into the vittals and drink; she's right when she says she han't no casion, for she eat dretful hearty of buttermilk pop jest afore we cum, and if she takes down all that are stuff she'll sairtin be sick abed."

"Gracious!" says I, "that are's the everlastinest lie I ever heerd in my life."

"So 'tis," says Aunt Huldy. "She ony eat tew bowls full afore we cum."

I tell ye it did seem as if I should ixpire. "O misery me!" exclamigated I, "I shall faint away — do lead me out into the hall." So Johnson he took holt of one arm and

Tomson he took holt of t'other and Wilkins he took my fan and blowd me, and Spriggins he follered arter groanin' consairnedly — half scart out of his wits. And whilst they was a takin' of me out — my head hangin' over on Johnson's sholder — my fethers fell out of my turbin, and says I, "Sumbody jest pick up them are ostridge fethers afore they git stompt on."

"I vanny she aint faint," says Missis Hawkins.

"I be faint tew," says I. So they took me into the hall and sot me down on the stairs, and sum on 'em blowd me and sum on 'em stufft smellin' bottles up my nose. Dr. Davis he felt of my pulse and his hand trembled dretfully, and tho' my eyes was shot I could tell that he was dretfully aggitated. Purty soon Jones (mean crittur) he took and stufft a nastyfetity pill down my mouth and made me as sick as a dog. So then I cum tew, and I riz up and says I, "I think I've had about eny most enuff trouble for one evenin', but I don't ker, I han't had no more'n Amandy had to Miss Kilcorban's ball, and I know't if my beauty and merits was less conspiccious, I should escaped it,* and if sumbody 'll have the carridge drew up I'll return to Castle Jorrocks."

"Bless yer gizzard," says Aunt Huldy, "don't ye know we cum afoot?"

"Well," says Spriggins, "I'll go hum and git our waggin if Missis Wilkins will let her nigger boy drive ye hum."

Wilkins said, "sairtinly." So Spriggins went hum and putty soon he cum back with his hosses and waggin, and Johnson and Tomson and Wilkins they helpt me git reddy,

* Childern of the Abby, chap. 20.

and then Spriggins he went out to the waggin and helpt me in, and says he, "I shan't stay much longer now you've gone, for there aint a young woman here I care teppence for but you, and Ide go clear hum with ye if it want for stayin' to git sum of that are egg-nogg — but I'll stop and see ye to-morrer when I go hum from school, if you're willin'." Thinks me, if he'd a leff out what he said about the egg-nogg and guayne to school 'twould a ben jest like what Sir Charles Bingley said to Amandy when she was guayne away from Missis Kilcorban's ball. So I giv him permission jest as Amandy did Sir Charles and then the driver druv off; and 'twas a gret big flambergasted lumber waggin and it jolted most consairnedly, and I got knockt round from one side to t'other, and once in a while I boundid up much as three or four foot into the air, and I tell ye I was all but did over when I got hum. I retired immejuntly to my compartment, and huv myself down in a cheer by the winder, jest as Amandy did. The woods, slivered by the beams of the moon that rode mojestic in the furmanent of stars, recalled to my rememberation the vows of unchanngable regard that had ben utterated there, so I took my pencil and writ the follerin' poetical confusion: —

Good gracious! good gracious! I'm sinkin' with sorrer,
My sperrits is low and my heart's full of horror,
The rendyvows joyful of gay dissipation
Aint no place for me in my sad sittyation.
And when I'm alone I lament and take on
Because my Philander's departed and gone.
The men is all syin' and dyin' about me,
And declarin' and vowin' they can't live without me.
But if they pursue me from mornin' to night
My darlin' Philander I never will slight,

My dearest — my slickest — my lovedest has went,
Fur — fur — from Permilly his steps he has bent.
His profile is all that is left for to cheer,
O! grandfather grievous! I wish he was here.*

Arter a spell Aunt Huldy cum hum, and she cum in to see how I did — she had her work-pockit crammin' full of cake.

"O aunt," says I, "how could ye be so onfeelin' as to say I eat tew bowls full of buttermilk pop?"

"Cause ye did," says she, "and I'm sure 'taint much for a hearty young woman to eat, but I'm sorry I telld on't, seein' ye feel so bad about it; so you jest eat a hunk of this ere cake, mabby ittle chirk ye up."

So I took ruther a small sized hunk and eat it, and Aunt Huldy she went out — and then fatigewd and distrest I huv off my splendid habileations, flung myself on my couch and arter a spell closed my tearful gorbs in a refreshin' and recomposin' slumber.

---

*This was arterwards printed in the "Podunk Illuminator."

CHAPTER VI.

The roosters was crowin' to wake up the folks,
The sun was beginnin' to shine overhead,
And dry up the dews that besprangled the oaks,
When the lovely Permilly got out of her bed.

ME.

THE mornin' arter the weddin' I got up the minnit I waked, cause Jabez Spriggins was a guayne to call on me on his way to school, and his school begun airlier'n mine — so I hurried and drest me afore breckfust — I drest very plain that mornin' — dident put no riggin' whatsoever on my head, but I let my hair in its own natyve and glossy hue float over my sholders,* but I couldent make it quirl nun to save my gizzard, though I put it up in papers, and tin, and everything else: and I wondered, and do yit, what made Amandy's hair always hang in graceful stringlets over her sholders; but I was detairmined Ide let mine hang down for once whether or no. Then I put on my blue calicer long-short, with a yaller skirt under it, hung my watch round my neck, and was just a guayne to put Philander in my pocket, when thinks me, Ile look at it fust. So I opened the box, and lo and behold, the picter was intirely rubbed out — they'd fingerd it so much the night afore to Missis Wilkinses. So I took a pen and draw'd it over agin as nigh like t'other

*Childern of the Abby.

as I could. Jest as Ide got it draw'd, Aunt Huldy cum to the foot of the stairs and hollerd to me to cum to breckfust. So I condescended down, and as soon as ever Uncle Jonah see me, says he, —

"Land o' liberty! Permilly, what in the name of nater have ye got yer hair all raked down so for? it looks like the dragon!"

"It don't nyther," says Aunt Huldy, says she, "it looks jest like the young wimmin's in the novels — so you jest hold yer jaw."

"Well," says I, "I don't ker what nobody says about it; for it's fixed putty much as Amandy did hern, and she knowd what was what, and I don't think men has any bizness to meddle with wimmin's dress, specially them that don't know nothin' about nothin'."

"I vum!" says Uncle Jonah, says he, "Permilly's ruther warm — wife, can't ye give her a little buttermilk pop to cool her off?"

"Nun of yer sarce about buttermilk pop," says Aunt Huldy — so sayin', she gin him a grip, but he deluded her grasp, and grabbin' a hunk of short cake he cut out doors, and then he stuck his head into the winder, and says he, —

"Ye better both on ye take a chaw of tobacker out of Milly's box. I reckon ittle callum yer minds." So sayin' he run off, and says aunt, says she, "That are's the provokinest creetur ever I see, and the wost on't is he never gits mad. I wish I had a little of Missis Peabody's grit. I tell ye I'd stir him up then — he wouldn't darst to poster me so." Jest then I looked up and see Spriggins a cummin' over the hill. "There!" says I, "he's a cummin'."

Aunt Huldy she lookt out and says she, "O, that are's

Jabez Spriggins; and cum to think on't, seems to me he took a master shine to you last night."

"I know it," says I, "and I don't know what to do with the creetur; Amandy always used Sir Charles Bingly well, but when she wouldent have him he eeny most died."

"Good landy!" says Aunt Huldy, "you don't mean to sairve him so I hope. He's a nice stiddy young man as ever was, and his father's got a rael productyve farm, and nary child in the world ony Jabez, and his payrents set a nation store by him — he's always ben a master hand to study — ben to school evry winter till he's got to be the best arithmeticker in town — and now he keeps the deestrict school, and I tell ye what, ye can't do better'n to take him if he axes ye, but good now! I wonder if he haint got a dead creetur tied to him."

"Yer granny's a dead creetur as much!" says I, "why, them are's my ostridge fethers stickin' out of his pocket."

Putty soon he began knockin' to the door. "You go to the door," says Aunt Huldy, "you look slicker'n I do."

"No, no," says I, "that aint accordin' to etiquit — you go, and when he axes for me, you cum out and call me." So she went and rushered him in, and arter a spell says he, "Where's that are young woman that's here?" I was a waitin' in the kitching, and aunt she screamed out and says she, "Hullo, Milly! he's axed arter ye." I was kinder mad to hear her up and yell so, but I went in, and arter we'd sluted one another, says aunt says she, "Did I do that accordin' to gunter?"

"No!" says I, "you'd orto come out and called me instid of hollerin' at me so consairnedly."

"Well," says she, "I'll know how next time." Then she went out, and says I to Spriggins, "Well, how did ye enjoy yerself last night arter my departer?"

"O, middlin'," says he, "I got a putty good chance at the egg-nogg and stuff — but I don't like to see folks act as they did. Arter the old people went hum the young folks carried on like sixty. The fellers they got yer ostridge fethers and stuck 'em behind their ears, and caperd round and hollered, 'Hooraw for the *pink of Podunk!*' and the bride said she thought you'd or'to teach faintin' away in your siminary, and the gearls all on 'em did act consairnedly. I tried ever so long to git yer fethers, and couldn't. At last Johnson took 'em and laid 'em on the table, and as soon as I got a chance I ketcht' 'em unbeknown to nobody and cum off."

"Well," said I, "I'm unexpressibly obleejed to ye for dooin' on't — but I don't ker teppence for what the gearls said, for I know 'twa'nt nothin' but envye — but them are students, I raly think 'twas strannge they should act so, seein' they was so took with me."

"I wish every one on 'em was lickt," says Spriggins. "As I was comin' by there this mornin'," continyd he, "I see 'em all a standin' round Davises office door, and I was a goin' straight by, but Tomson he yell'd out and says he, 'Hullo, Jonathan! where ye guayne?' Wilkins he gin him a hunch, and says he, 'Why, Tomson, that's Mr. Spriggins that you saw last night.' 'Ah!' says Tomson, 'excuse me, Mr. Spriggins, I thought 'twas an old acquaintance of mine.' 'O ho!' says Johnson, 'I see you've got Miss Ruggleses fethers in yer pocket.' 'Yis,' says I, 'and I'm a guayne to carry 'em to her — she's a mazin' putty young woman accordin' to my notion.' 'So

she is,' says they — 'but,' says Jones, 'you mustent tell her how we acted last night.' 'I will, by gosh,' says I. 'O don't,' says Johnson, 'we only frisked round a little with her fethers to please the ladies, you know they're all jealous of Miss Ruggles 'cause she's so honsome and interestin' — don't tell her.' 'I will, I swonny,' says I. 'Well, then,' says Tomson, 'tell her and be darned to ye — we're all a guayne to see her this evenin' for we've all fell in love with her — and we'll convince her to the conterary.' Then I cum off, and Johnson he hollered to me, 'Take care how you take arter her if you don't want to fight a duel with us.' 'Golly!' says I, 'do you think ye can all on ye git her?' and whilst I was a cummin' along thinks me, I'll be hanged if I won't up and ax her to have me — and I tell ye what, Miss Ruggles — I aint a jokin' when I say I set more by ye and like ye better'n ary young woman ever I knowd — for I took a notion to ye the very day I fust see ye, when I ontied the dead hen, and if you'll have me I'll have you, and we'll have one another. What do ye say to't?"

"Grandfer Griffin!" says I, "is that are the way you prepose yerself?"

"Why," says he, "ain't that are the right way?"

"I've got as gret a mind," says I, "as ever I had to eat — no — as ever I had not to eat, to go right strait off out of your societry without dainin' to give ye any anser — but seein' you've did me tew or three good turns, and as I intertain a gret steem for yer caracter I won't do't — and here's the Childern of the Abby, the book I promised to lend ye, and do ye take it hum and pruse it attentyvely, specially the 8th chapter, fust vollum, and there ye'll lairn how to offer yer hand and heart — and arter

you've lairnt how ye may cum and ax me agin if yer a mind tew — my astonishment that you sho'd have the audackity to take arter me is only exceeded by my surprise, and I sha'n't say yes nor no to yer supposition till ye lairn to promulgate it better." So sayin' I riz up to go out, and jest as I got to the door says Spriggins, says he, "Stop a minnit." So I stopt, and says he, "As fur as I can understand what you've ben a sayin', I take it ye won't be put out if I cum to see ye once in a while whilst I'm readin' this ere book."

"O no!" says I, "Amandy always treated Sir Charles Bingley with the greatest condescention — so I give ye permission to cum." So sayin' I walkt out of the room as stiff as stillyards, and went up into my chomber and as I lookt out of the winder I see Spriggins guayne over the hill readin' in the Childern of the Abby as he went.

Lookin' at my watch I see it lacked a half an hour to school time, so I sot down and writ with amazin' rappidity the follerin' stanzys: —

TO JABEZ SPRIGGINS.

Alas, poor swine,* with yaller hair,
I'm sorry for ye, I declare;
I hate to slight ye, but I must,
Tho' I'm afeard yer heart will bust.

O gracious! how you'll rip and swear,
And mabby cry and tear yer hair,
And cuss the fatal minnit when
You met me with the old dead hen.

I can't be yourn; this heart of mine
Is plighted to another swine;
And them besides that git besmitten,
Must all expect to git the mitten.

*Swain.

O, if I had a thousand hearts,
They'd all be full of Cupid's darts,
And evry single dart would be
Fired from the eyes of my dear P.

So, poor young man with yaller hair,
Giv up and die in grum despair,
Set down and sythe and weep and mourn,
Permilly never can be yourn.

I never showed that are to Spriggins till arter ——· but I won't antickipate. Arter 'twas writ I went to school — but I guess Ile discontinny, and tell what concurred that day going tew and from my siminary in another chopter.

CHAPTER VII.

"On pranced the gallant steed,
Proud of the heft he bore,
O'er hill and vale and flowery meed
Unto the castle door." SPRIGGINS MISSELANY.

WELL, I went and put up my dinner and put on my things, and as 'twas a dretful cloudy mornin' I reckoned Ide take an umbril — so I went and axed Aunt Huldy to lend me thairn; but she said 'twas a new one and as it looked like for rain she guesst I hadent better take it for she dident want to have it git wet, — so I went without none; but afore Ide got half way there it begun to rain consairnedly, and seein' Dr. Davises office door open I run in there, and there was all them fellers

and you never see sich a fluster as they made when I cum in, and I must a lookt amazin' interestin' with my hair all beshovelled, and my habileations drippin' with moister. "O dear me suz, gentlemen," says I, "I've got ketcht in a shower, and if ye'll lend me an umbril I'll be obleejed to ye." So they all jumpt to git it and then they had a tussle which sho'd accompanate me — evry one on 'em wanted to go. At last says Jones (the doctor's student) says he, "Let Miss Ruggles take her choice." "Agreed," says they. So says I, "I can git along well enough without nobody, but seein' ye're so anxious to go with me Ile choose Mr. Johnson." When I said this the other fellers ript out a mess of wicked swearin' words, and shook their fists at Johnson. "Now, gentlemen," says I, "I boseech on ye not to fight a duil with the favored swine, for I set store by all on ye, ony I admire Mr. Johnson because he resembleates my Philander so much." So Johnson he gin me his arm and we started, when Jones up and says he, "Miss Ruggles will get her long-short as wet as muck — Ile jest bring my surtoot and let her put it on." So he run and brung his surtoot. That Jones want a very putty appearin' young man, and I was real pervoked at him for givin' me the nastyfettity pill at the weddin' — but when he was so consairned about me as for to offer me his surtoot, thinks me, Ile surmount my nantipathy to him. So they all helpt me on with it and Johnson he buttoned it round me. "Now," says I, "what's to be did? it's a master sight too long." Jones was wonderful tall, and his surtoot was a turrible long drab one with a number of capes sich as they wore in them days, and I was oncommon short and fairy-like in my figger.

"Ile tell ye what," says Wilkins, "Ile go behind and hold it up."

"O no, let me," says Tomson.

"Now, gentlemen," says I, "if it's so desirable to go long of me, s'pose one of ye holds up each skeart."

"Thattle be charmin'," says Wilkins. So they took holt, and we sot off, and Jones he stood in the door, and lookt at us. Whilst he was guayne along, says Johnson says he, "O! the delightsome gratifaction of shelterin' the most beautifullest of created creeturs from this outragin' storm!" "Ah, it's exquizzitte!" says Tomson. "It's the squintessence of pleasure," says Wilkins. And sich like ixpressions they made all along.

Putty soon we arrove to the deacon's, and bein' quite late the scholars had all cum and sum on 'em was lookin' out of the winders, and when they see us they hulloed to t'others and they all run to the winders to look at us, and ye never heerd sich a roarin' as they sot up in yer born days; and when we got into the house they all cum out on the stairs to see us — I tell ye I was awful mad to see 'em so unrespectful, and I should a let right into 'em and knockt over a few if I hadent a concludid to change my monner of teachin' a little, — for that mornin' whilst I was a dressin' I happen'd to think how't I'd orto look into the Childern of the Abby to see how Amandy managed her school — for Ide forgot, that bein' a part of the novil not very interestin' to me; so I stopt in the midst of my twilight and read about it — and it said she never jaw'd 'em nor chasigated 'em, but let 'em do jest as they was a mind to. So I of course detairmined to do so tew. Well, the young men resisted me to take off the surtoot, and whilst they was doin' on't, I see Amarilly Peabody, the deacon's oldest dorter, and Polly Mariar Dawson, (a cousen of hern visitin' there,) a peekin' through a door and laffin dis-

tractidly — I s'pose they was dretful jelous. O! what a turrible thing jelousy is! It distils pison into the most secret and unbeknown recessions of the heart, — it discomposes and frusterates the finest affections of natur', and scatters the firebrands of confusion and purgatory throughout societry.

Arter I was disbegaged from the surtoot, says Johnson says he, "If the rain continys all day we'll cum arter ye this arternoon."

"O! don't pester yerselves," says I.

"Pester us!" says Wilkins says he, "why, it would be the most consummit satisfication for us to attend ye neverstandin' we should git wet to the backbone."

"O!" says Tomson, raisin' his eyes and layin' his hand on his bussom, "Ide be willin' to kiss yer footprints — 'twould be exquizzite."

"O landy!" says I, "that wouldent be woth while — ye may enjoy the felickity of imprintin' a kiss on my lily hand" — so I reacht it out and all on 'em kist it, and says I, "I intreat that ye won't nun on ye premit yerselves to intertain hopes that must univittably be disrealised and eend in disappintment, — for I may as well conform ye fust as last, that I'm ingaged to the most charminest swine on airth." So sayin' I hawled out the tobacker box and kist it, and put it back agin — and then makin' a low curchy I perceeded up chomber, and as I went along I could hear all the fellers a syin'.

When I went into the school-room the gearls was all settin' down lookin' jest as if they suspected a knockin' — but I went strait to my cheer and sot down, and says I, "Gearls, I aint a goin' to exercise no more severitude towerds ye. A number of my puppils has left my siminary,

and it must be on account of my extrornary strictness, for I can't think of nothin' else that could a had an attendancy to dimminnish my scholers, — so I sha'n't giv nobody no furder 'casion to complain of my stairnness." Ye never see creeturs act as my scholers did that day cause I dident jaw 'em nun — more'n forty times I was on the pint of cuffin' sum on 'em; but then Ide happen to think — so I let 'em go on jest as they pleased. In the arternoon when the little ones had went out, and the big ones was a paintin', and I was givin' Glorianny Stokes sum constructions consairnin' the picter she was a copyin', ('twas Gineral Putnam ridin' down the mountin' — an uncommon splendid and highly finished picter,) Philindy Ann Higgins hollered out, —

"Do look, Miss Ruggles."

"Timothy Titus!" says I, "if that are aint my retinow a cummin," — and sure as creation, 'twas Johnson, and Wilkins, and Tomson, a cummin' with a hoss to take me hum. The gearls all snorted out a laffin', and says Mirandy Peabody, says she, "I never see sich a bony, scrawny hoss, in my life."

"Shet up!" says I, "it's a sperited, fiery steed." Then I stuck my head out of the winder, and says I, "Gentlemen, what for did ye cum so airly? yer altogether tew punctable, — but ye may cum in and visit my siminary if ye want to." So they was a cummin', and says I, "Ye'd best tie up the hoss fust, — mabby 'll he'll run away."

"Run away!" says Drusilly Potter, "he wouldn't run away if ye should jam him with a red-hot poker from now to next never — it's father's old Billy; he's game legged and eeny most blind, — much as a body can do to make him stir at all."

Well, they cum in and sot down, and says I, "Now, gearls, don't let yer attention be extracted by these ere young men — it's very improper." So they all on 'em kept on paintin', ony jest Drusilly Potter, and she kept her head out of the winder and talked to the old hoss Billy all the time — she was a turrible hawbuck. The hoss he knowd her voice and he begun a snortin' and ye never heerd sich a consairnid rackit in yer born days. I was dretful 'shamed, for the fellers must a thought strange on't; but I didn't want to jaw her, for 'twouldn't a ben like Amandy. The young men egzamined the paintin's and admired them amazin'ly, and putty soon I hollered to the little gearls to cum in, and 'twas ever so long afore they obeydid the summonses. Finally they cum in, and says I, "Ye may put on yer things, for I don't want to keep these ere gentlemen waitin'." But the fellers said they want in no hurry, and begged on me to continny my constructions — so I heerd 'em spell, and then the fellers wanted to hear 'em read; so I tell'd 'em to git their English Readers, and they did. They read in the poitry in the arternoon this time; I told 'em to read the peece beginnin', "Dear Chole, while the boosy crowd" — 'twas a gret favoryte of mine, and I read it beautiful — I always read a vairse fust for each on 'em, to show 'em how. The gentlemen was inraptered with the readin'. Then I tell'd 'em to put on their things and make their monners — so they did; and says I, "Siminary's out" — and they all cleared out.

So I begun to git ready, and the fellers went down and brung up the old surtoot.

"It don't rain," says I, "I han't no 'casion for that are."

"But," says Johnson, "it's damp, and we're afraid ye'll ketch yer death a cold without it." So they put it on, and they exorted me down stairs, and resisted me to surmount the hoss, — and there in the medder aside the house was all my scholers a waitin' for to see me go. Johnson he led the hoss, and Wilkins and Tomson walkt on each side on't, and in that sittyation we went clean hum — and ev'ry once in a while the hoss would stop still, and Tomson, (tender-hearted young man,) instid of thumpin' on him, would giv his tail a jerk and make him go agin. All the gentlemen kept a payin' on me complements all the way about my mojestic appearance — and ev'rybody stared at us; but nobody couldent say a word — they was all speechless with admireation. I must a persented an imposin' appearence with the gret long surtoot a hangin' over the hosses back, and my hair a floatin' over my sholders; but I was quite oncomfortable, for 'twas dretful warm, and the surtoot was dretful heavy, and the sun beet down awful hot, so't my phiziogermy was all kivered with swetspiration.

Well, we got hum. I unmounted, and Johnson giv the hoss a slap, and he limped off to Potter's. "Walk in, gentlemen," says I. So they all cum in, and desisted me off with the surtoot, and I opened the square room door, and rushered 'em in. "Beseat yerselves," says I. Then I went up chomber and arrannged my dress; wiped the swetspiration off my face; done up my hair, it felt so warm; stuck a couple of ostridge fethers in my head, and condescended to the square room, where I found Aunt Huldy and Mr. Jabez Spriggins, and his mother, an olderly woman, of oncommon good understandin', and very agreeable, but very nigh-sighted and considerble deef; so't

she dident appear as much struck with my looks as she otherways would a ben. She'd ben there all the arternoon, and Jabez stopt on his way hum from school; they'd ben a settin in the kitching long of Aunt Huldy.

"Yer sarvent," says Jabez, "I make ye acquaintid with my mother."

"How do ye dew?" says I, but she dident look off her nittin' work. So Jabez he hollered right in her ear, "Miss Ruggles axes ye how ye dew?" "Miss Rugg?" says she, "well, why couldent she speak up so's to be heerd?" So I went and sot down nigh by her and yelled out as loud as ever I could,

"Yer considerble hard of hearin', ain't ye Missis Spriggins?" "Hard of hearin!" says she, "yer mistaken; my hearin's as good as ever 'twas, ony I can't hear whisperin' no more'n anybody else that hain't alwas ben used to't; if they'd talk as they did when I was young I could hear well enuff." Well, I talkt to Missis Spriggins a spell, and she seemed to take quite a notion to me 'cause I hollered so loud — said I talkt as they did in old times. Byme by tea was reddy, and aunt cum in and called us out — so we went into the kitching, and says aunt, "Set by." So we sot down to the table, and we had punkin pie, and apple-sass, and short cake, and nutcakes, and sweet cake, and pickled cowcumbers, and sage cheeze.

"Missis Spriggins," says Aunt Huldy, "is yer tea agreeable?"

"Yis," says she.

"Jabez is yourn?" "Fust rate," says he.

"Mr. Wilkins, is yourn?" "Excellent," says he.

"Mr. Johnson is yourn?" "Delishus," says he.

"Mr. Tomson is yourn?"

"Exquizzite," says he.

"Well now," continyd she, "do eat, and don't be bashful — do try to make out a supper:" and they all did eat putty hearty but me — I ony took a dish of tea, and dident eat nothin'.

Putty soon arter tea old Spriggins cum in a wagon arter his wife. Aunt and uncle went in the kitching and I was alone with four interestin' young men: so says I, "Gentlemen, what good do ye spose it's a guayne to do ye to take arter me? I'm undessolubly united in the bonds of affection on Philander; I can't incurridge nary on ye." They all put their honkerchers to their eyes — Spriggins he lookt dretfully pleased, and says he, "Ye don't mean me tew, 'cause ye ain't a guayne to giv me my anser till I've larnt that are you know what, and thattle be putty soon, I tell ye."

"O!" says Wilkins says he, "don't put a momentarious eend to all my hopes."

Says Tomson, "Don't break my heart by sayin' ye won't be mine."

Says Johnson, "Don't, for goodness sake drive me to desperation and discomboberation by sich soul-distractin' words!"

"My gracious, Mr. Johnson," says I, "how much that are speech of yourn did sound like Philander."

"Murder!" says he; "don't mention the name of that detistable rival." Putty soon they all went, and if ever there was three fellers felt bad, them are three collidge fellers did.

Arter they'd went I went to take a walk, and I rombled down to the lower eend of Uncle Jonah's farm — a morantic and secludid spot, where there was a swamp with

bushes all round it, and the air was impregginated with the flagrance of thousands of lillies that growd there in gret lugshuriance — and havin' my writin' consairns along I sot down on a stump and convoked the aid of the musses as follers :

ODE TO MEMORY.

O ! memory if 'twant for thee
I should forget my lover —
And then how wretched he would be
My feelins to discover !

And gracious ! I should be bereft
Of every consolation,
And sink right down beneath the heft
Of my sad sittyation.

Tho' troubled, I won't make no fuss
If memory doesn't fail me —
I can't imagine nothin' wuss
That possibly could ail me.

Tho' natur seems, when he ain't here,
As doleful as December —
I'd ruther he'd be gone a year
Than for to disremember.

Them lilies when the sun was up
As stiff as pokers grew,
But now they're jest as wet as sop
And all bent down with dew.

So Milly's onforgitful heart
Is bendin' down with sorrer ;
I'll weep as long as we're apart,—
I wish he'd cum to-morrer.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Capting, where's my gallant sailor,
Ime dezirous for to know?"
"Madam, if you mean Sam Taylor,
He was married a week ago."

OLD SONG.

WELL, the anteceedin' week of things went on purty much as they did the proceedin'; but a Saturday an event conspired that channged my destination. When I went hum from my siminary, lo and behold, there was a letter from Podunk for me; and I opened it and found 'twas from father — here's a subscription on't:

"DORTER MILLY: — Cum hum right strait off you — yer marm is to the pint of death. She was took last week with a dretful cramp in her side — awful crick in her back — blind headache and turrible cold feet. She's talkt about her Milly ever sen she was took, and wanted to have us send for ye at fust, but as I reckoned she'd git up agin afore long — (cause she's ben took so a number of times and never died afore) — I thought 'twant best to send for ye, we've had sich peecable times sen ye went off; but she got wus and wus, and now we don't have no idee she'll git well — so ye jest cum hum as quick as ye can, and dew make up yer mind to be of sum sarvice to us when ye git here.

Yer daddy,

"NADAB RUGGLES."

Now, thinks me, my exhibition 's all knockt in the head — (for yer must know I was perjectin to have an exhibi tion in my siminary) — and I mustent think of nothin' now only my beloved payrent — so I huv myself on the bed and jackelated, "O mairciful creation! support and strenken me in this tryin hour, and onable me to cumfort my onfortinate mother afore she dies." Jest as Amandy did when she heard of her father's illness. Then I thought Ide go into highsterics. So I begun kickin' and squallin' and rollin' my eyes consairnedly. Aunt Huldy she heerd me and she cum up.

"Grandfer grievous!" says she, "what's to pay?"

"O dear suz!" says I, "read that are letter and ye won't wonder at me — for my everlastin' dear mother isent suspected to live from one day to t'other."

"You don't say so," says she. So she took and read it, and says she, "Ile go hum with ye, for I must see Viny once more afore she dies; jump up, Milly; we'll git reddy right off; and go in the stage when it cums along this evenin'."

"Onfeelin' woman!" says I, "how can ye tell me to git up when I've got the highstericks so owfully!"

"I know it," says she, "poor child! but then if ye don't git over it the stage will go along afore yer reddy — and don't ye remember how Amandy hurried to git to her father when she heerd he was sick." So I hopt up in the most agonizin' state of condition and begun to git reddy. I put on my black rottenette gownd, and a black bombazeen long shawl that mother gin me, one she wore when she was in mournin' for Grandfer Hogobone — then I tied a black ribbin round my bunnit, and stuck one amazin' long black ostridge fether in't. Then I stufft all the rest

of my things in my chist and lockt it up. Whilst I was fixin', Aunt Huldy went out and told Uncle Jonah, and purty soon they cum in, and says uncle, says he,

"Why, Milly, it's all nonsense for yer aunt to go hum with ye."

"I guess Ile go for all you — so there now," says aunt.

"Well," says uncle, "I shant giv ye no money to go with. Ye never hear of any of yer relations bein' sick but what ye want to go and see 'em die, and cut a sworth to the funeral, and ye might better stay hum and take care of yer family."

"Mighty family!" says Aunt Huldy, "ony one old coot to see tew!"

"Mister and Missis," says I, "if ye want to qurril on this mawlancolly casion I wish ye'd retire to the kitchenary department, and not disturb me by yer discongenial exploteration." So they went off, and I sot down and writ the follerin' notice to my school:

"DARLIN PUPPILS: — It is with the biggest sorrer I denounce to you that I shall be onable to construct you enny more at present; and whether I shall ever consume the delightful task to develup yer minds enny more is a circumstence that lies hid in the unbeholden debths of futrinity. I am summonsed to contend the death-bed of an only and beloved mother — but I wish to desire to make one last request of ye. I want ye all to go to meetin' tomorrer drest in black gownds and black ostridge fethers in yer bonnits, and when meetin's out, perceed to the front of Deacon Peabody's door — rannge yerselves in a row and sing the follerin' stanzy to the tune of the long meetre doxyology:

"Alas! our darlin' teacher's gone,
That's why we put these black gownds on;
We can't submit to't tho' we must;
It seems as if our very hearts would bust."

Arter supper the stage cum along, and Uncle Jonah run out and hulloed, "Passenger for Podunk;" so they druv up, and we all went out, and whilst the driver was helpin' Uncle Jonah put my chist into't, I huv my arms round Aunt Huldy and kist her agin and agin, exclamigatin', "Farewell belovedest, darlinest Aunt Huldy — may all the blessins of Heaven be condescended upon yer." Then I stretcht out one hand and had t'other on my heart, and lookin' round me with a heavy sythe, says I thus: "Adoo! sylvanic shades of Higgins Patent! no longer will ye giv a sylum to the fair Permilly. Adoo! sweet umbraggious shady grove where I parted with Philander — no more will my fairy form wander amonkst yer excludid shades, to court the musses and think on my distant swine — I bid ye an unterminable farewell!"

There was three gentlemen in the stage, and they stared at me consairnedly, and says one on 'em to Aunt Huldy, "Is the young woman derannged?"

"Derannged! no;" says she, "ony she's ruther smarter'n common folks."

Well, I got in and we druv off. O! if there is a minnit in this subernary state of egsistence, when the sad and sorrerful sperrit fells as if it wouldent giv teppence for all creation, 'tis when we part with frinds. I felt so then — so I huv my head languidiously over onto the sholder of the man that sot aside of me, and bust into a simmultaneous flood of tears.

Arter Ide recovered a little I raised my droopin' head

and lookt round and I never see tew surprisder lookin' creeturs than the men that sot opposit of me. They opened their eyes as big as sarcers and begun whisperin' about me — but the one next to me dident say a word. So I lookt round at him and good gracious! he lookt so much like Philander (ony sum older,) that I utterated a percin' skreik and tumbled prostracious on the bottom of the stage. They all jumpt up and resisted me to rise and arter I was beseated, says I, "Gentlemen, mabby you think strannge of me, and for fear you should intertain oranious impressions regardin' me, Ile tell ye my history, if ye'd like to hear it." They all said they'd like to hear it wonderfully — so I telld 'em the hull I've telld my readers; only I couldent remember all the poitry; but I had a coppy of my Ode to Memory in my work pocket, and I took that out and read it to 'em. The young man that set aside of me said he never heerd enny thing equal to it; but the other men dident say a word, and nary on 'em dident speak to me agin — they was olderly men and oncommon ruff lookin', but 'tother one was a rael slick lookin' feller — he telld me he lived in Utica; and like most of the residers of that extensyve and anncient city he was oncommon ginteel in his appearance, and refined in his monners. Well, purty soon we arrove at Utica, and the stage druv up to the stage-house, and there was a lot of men standin' round, and when the young man got out, there was one run out amonkst from 'em and shook hands with him; so I poked my head out to git a better sight on him, and as true as creation, 'twas Philander! my long-lost Philander. He was considerble altered, and I should a thought 'twas Johnson if he hadent a had on the same green coat with a black velvet collar he had on when he paid his distresses to me;

but there was no mistake; so I jumpt out of the stage and run towerds him. The men all gin way for me and I rushed ahead exclamigatin, "O Philander! my own darlin' Philander! Heaven has at last restorated you to your mournin' but faithful Permilly."

So sayin' I huv my arms round him and eeny most had a highsteric fit. There was ever so many young men standin' round, and amongst 'em I see Wilkins and Tomson, and they all hoorawd. Philander, instid of returnin' my inraptured caresses, lookt rael mad, and dident know what to do. At last the young man that cum in the stage with me says he, "The young woman's crazy — she's taken my brother to be sumbody else;" and says Philander, "We'd better take her into the house till the stage is reddy." So he and his brother led me in and sot me down on a sofy, and all the other fellers follered arter. Philander and his brother whispered together a spell, and then Philander went out, motionin' to t'other fellers to accompanate him. Arter they'd all went ony Philander's brother and me, he cum to me and says he, "Miss Ruggles;" says I, "Hay!" says he, "I've got suthin to tell ye, thattle no doubt make ye feel ruther bad, and tho' I'd ruther have an iron spike druv thro' me than to communicate sich a piece of contelligence, yit it's my duty to do it, and if I don't ye'll find it out sum time or other."

"Dew tell," says I, "my curiosity is rung up to the biggest pitch — dew tell me."

"Well," says he, "if I must I must — Philander's married!"

If a thousand muskits had ben fired at my head, and a million baggernets run through my body, I shouldent a ben more bethunderstruck nor no nigher killed than I was that

minnit. I yelled out as loud as ever I could, and then I got up and took off my bunnit and laid it on the table, and begun tearin' my hair most awfully, and ravin' and screemin' the wost way, so't all the folks in the house cum runnin' in to see what was the matter. Arter Ide got complectly desausted I sot down and gin vent to my sorrer in heart-splittin' groans and sythes, and thinks me, how would Amandy acted if she'd heern Lord Mortimer was married? There's no tellin'. But I know how she acted when she heerd he was a guayne to be. She lost her appertite and growd as thin as a rail; but dident say a word about it to nobody — tho' she took on when she got alone. And thinks me, like enuff Philander's torrannical father has ben a makin' of him git married agin his inclination, jest as Lord Mortimer's father was a guayne to make him. So says I, "Did his cruel father impel him to git married agin his inclination?" and I lookt round to where Philander's brother sot, and lo and behold, he want there. I spose he was so overcum by my sufferins he couldent stand it, and so cleard out, and I never see no more on him nor Philander nyther from that day to this. I han't no doubt but what Philander had been conduced to believe that I was onfaithful to him. Lord Mortimer wouldent a wiped his old shoes on Lady Euphrasia Sutherland if he hadent a sposed Amandy was onfaithful — no more wouldent Philander a married anybody else if he hadn't a sposed Ide forgit him, and Ide be wiling to bet a hoss that Johnson and Wilkins and Tomson had been a lyin' to him about me; 'cause they wanted me themselves. Well, arter thinkin' on't all over I got up and dun up my hair, and put on my bunnit, and tho' there was more'n forty folks — men, wimmin, and children, axin' of me questions — I dident

anser 'em nor tell 'em what ailded me, but arter Ide got fixt I went out and stood by the door till t'other stage got reddy to go, and then I got in and huv my head agin the back side of the stage and shot up my eyes and dident open 'em agin whilst t'other passengers was a gittin' in, nor for quite a spell arterwards: but there I sot a ponderin', and my rumirations was the most distressin' I ever experienced in my born days, and whilst I was a settin' in that persition I composed sum very mournful stanzys, and I thought Ide write 'em off so I opend my eyes and I see 'twas considerble dark, so't I couldent see the folks that was in the stage, ony so fur as to see that they was all men folks, and I was the ony shemale in the stage. So says I, "Gentlemen, I want to write down sum poitry and I don't see how Ime to do it, it's so dark."

"O!" says one on 'em says he, "I can write as well in the dark as I can without a light. Ile write it for ye if ye'll tell me as I go long."

"Ile be obleejed to ye to do it," says I: so I gin him my pencil and a piece of paper, and he took his hat and writ on top on't, (me tellin' on him a line to once) the follerin':

ON A LAMENT.

Did you ever see Philander?
O! he was a charmin' swine;
He was tall, and he was slender;
He was honsome; he was mine.

To a maid he took a notion,
She his love did soon return,
And while he was on the oshun
She believed his heart was hern.

He intended for to marry;
But alas! his mind he channged —
Now she's ravin' like old Harry;
He is false, and she's derannged.

"That's all," says I, "now giv it to me."

"O no!" says he, "you must allow me to read it to my frinds — it's exquizzite." As soon as he said that I know'd who 'twas: "Land of liberty!" says I, "Mr. Tomson, is that you?"

"Egzackly," says he, "and I vow I believe this is Miss Ruggles — I dident know ye afore — and here's Mr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkins. I hope we shall have the pleshure of yer company to Skenackady."

"I declare," says Johnson, "this is truly a happifyin' circumstence."

"By George!" says Wilkins, "we're a fortinate set of fellers to be so onexpectedly favored with Miss Ruggleses company."

"Hold yer jaw," says I, "yer a mean, contemptible set of villings; I won't have nothin' to say to nary one on ye; so jest giv up that are poitry."

"This is strannge," says Johnson, "how on airth have we offended you?"

"Purty question for you to ax, you tarnal wretch," says I, shaking my fist in his face.

"What have we done?" says Tomson.

"Dun?" says I. "Haint ye ben the means of dashin' the dish of felickity from my lips? — Haint ye underminded me in the affections of Philander? Haint it ben thro' your instrumentality that he's went and married another, and left me to uncomboundid dispare?"

"O yer mistaken!" says they all to once.

"I aint nyther," says I — so I stuft my fingers in my ears and held 'em so ever so long. At last Tomson begun to read the poitry he'd writ down for me out loud, and when he'd red it they sung it to a Methodist tune.

Tomson he lined it as they do in meetin'. So I took my fingers out of my ears to listen to 'em, and says Johnson, "Music hath charms to sooth a savidge! I tho't you'd get over it."

"I hain't got over it nyther," says I — so I stuck my head out of the winder and hollerd "Murder! murder!" as loud as ever I could yell. Well the hosses they was dretfully skairt, and took off as tight as ever they could pull. The driver he tried to hold 'em in, and kept a hollerin' "hoe!" but they went faster and faster, and purty soon they went tearin' down a hill and huv the stage right over; and we all cum tumblin' out *en massy* — but this ere's an oncommon long chopter, so I must cum to an eend just where I shouldent orto.

CHAPTER IX.

"Come tell me, blue-eyed strannger,
Say whither dust thou roam,
O'er this wide world a rannger,
Hast thou no frinds nor hum?"

OLD SONG.

AT fust I reckoned we was all killd, but arter a spell we found we was all alive, ony considerble stunted — but the driver was the maddest creetur ever I see; he cusst and swore, and said if it hadent a ben for me the hosses wouldent a run away. Well, there was a house nigh by and a man and a big boy cum out and helpt 'em fix the stage, and arter 'twas fixt the fellers was

a guayne to help me into't agin, but says I, in a senatorian voice, "Lemme alone, I aint a guayne to travil a step furder wid ye!"

"Unpossible!" says all three of the fellers, "you mustent leave us so."

"Hold yer jaw," says I, "yer a set of thunderin' mean scampers, I won't be seen in yer company — I despise ye more'n I dew the airth I tred on — I don't consider ye worth turnin' my nose up at."

"Well," says the driver, "if ye did ye wouldent have to do it, seein' it's alreddy arrannged in that persition." When the driver said that, the fellers all lafft consairnedly.

"O, lawful suz!" says I, "ye all begin to laff now seein' ye can't git me. Jabez Spriggins telld the truth about ye when he said ye tho't ye'd lairnt all there was to be lairnt to Hamilton Collidge and so sot off for Durrup Collidge to use that up tew; but I can tell ye if ye go to all the Collidges in Americy, ye won't know B from broomstick — so Mister Perliteness" (continuyd I, addressin' the driver), "jest take off my chist, for Ime a guayne to stop to this ere house. "Yer chist," says he, "ye han't no chist." So says I to the man, "Mister, I wish ye'd let yer boy there go up to Utica and get my chist — they forgot to put it aboard the stage." But the driver up and says he, "Don't ye dew it; she han't got no chist; she's crazy."

"Ye lie like split," says I, "I'm a young woman of the biggest respecterbility — of Dutch distraction on the mother's side, and New England consent on the father's, and my Grandfer Ruggles fit, bled, and died in the revolutionerry tussle, and arterwards drawd a pension, and if

it want for all these ere sircumstences my own individdyal extinction would be enuff to skewer me the steam and admireation of all creation."

"Well," says the driver, "ye've got to pay as much dammage as if ye went to Durrup." So I took out my puss and paid him and they druv off and I went into the house; and says I to the man and woman, "That are driver haint no reason to think I'm derannged, ony cause I wouldent travil with the company he's carryin', and I do boseech on ye to send arter my chist to Utica, for it's got all my notions in't."

"Well," says the man, "it's pitch dark now — I can't let Hoky go to-night, but mabby I will to-morrer."

"Well, then," says I, "jest give giv me a compartment for I want to go into a state of retiracy."

"Give ye what?" says the woman.

"Why, a room to sleep in you," says I.

"Well," says she, "ye'll have to sleep with Zady, for the schoolmaster's a boardin' here this week, and he's got the spare bed, and he's gone to bed now." So she took a lontern and went up chomber and I follered arter, and she rushered me into a room that was in considerable of a condition — there was a half a lookin glass, an old three legged cheer, and an old shakin' table that would tumble over if ye lookt at it hard; and in the corner was a trundle bed and a gret fat gearl asleep on't a snorin' the wost way.

"Good woman," says I. "My name's Missis Hitchins," says she.

"Well, Missis Hitchins," says I, "ye may make yer disappearance." So she went off, and I took the lontern and went up and took a realizin' sense of the trundle bed;

and besides the snorin' of the fleshy gearl, the oncommon narrowness of the trundle bed was sich as to render it onpossible to repoze there: so thinks me, I'll set up all night. So I turned the old cheer over and sot down on't, and begun to ponderate; and thinks me, how much my sittyation is like Amandy's when she stopt to old Byrnes flambergasted cottidge. What a pity she dident have my genyus for makin' poitry — what an interestin' account she'd a gin of her misfortins; but taint everybody that has a natral genyus for't, and if it don't cum natral there's no use in tryin' — they mought as well try to make a univairse as to try to make poitry without beein' natrally gifted that way — and seein' I've got sich gret poeticle tallents Ide or'to improve 'em, and certainly the sollem sittyation Ime placed in to-night should or'to inspire me with a wonderful frenzy for composin'. So I lookt in my ridicule and there want no paper there.

Just then I heerd sumbody in the contigruous room utterate the terriblest percin' skreek I ever heerd in my born days. So thinks me, sumbody's dyin' or sumbody's murderin' sumbody; and bein' indued with oncommon curridge, I ketcht the lontern and run in there — but there want no noise nor nobody there ony sumbody in bed; so I went up to the bed to see whether the occerpyer was dead or alive — and lo and behold, there was a very interestin' lookin' young man asleep there, and thinks me he had the nightmare when he yelled so — no doubt he was a dreamin' of his own sorrers and misfortins, for I knowd from his looks that he want a strannger to greef. He had on a red nightcap with a tossil on top, and a number of holes in't thro' which his dark hair was pokin' in greaceful neglitude. O! (solliquized I,) greef has did its work on that are

long thin nose and turned up the tip on't with continyl sobbin'! greef has ondoubtedly drawd down the corners of that are mouth, and dreams of unrelentin' ennemys pursuin' of ye has certinly skairt ye to sich an alarming degree as to make yer ears start out so and bust them holes in yer nightcap! peace to yer ashes, mournin' swine. So sayin' I turned round to go out, when I obsairved sum paper lyin' on the table. So I reckoned Ide help myself to a sheet on't to write sum poitry on; but seein' an inkstand and pen there thinks me, Ile write here cause this ere table don't shake so as t'other does. So I drawd up a cheer and sot down, and my medifications resulted in the follerin' confusion: —

Who knows but what I'm settin' nigh
To sum extinguished strannger,
That from his hum was forced to fly
O'er this wide world a rannger.

Mabby his father was onkind,
And tried to make him wed
Sum gearl that wasent to his mind,
And so from hum he fled.

Tho' others blame ye, mournin' man,
The fair Permilly'll praise ye,
Because ye wouldent jine yer hand
To disbeloved Euphrashy.

Wake! long-nosed marquis! lord or earl,
Open your eyes and see
A mournin', pinin', weepin' gearl
To simpathise with thee.

Oh dear! if you knowd my distress,
I'm sure 'twould raise yer dander,
For now I mourn the onfaithfulness
Of my once true Philander!

And like enuff (for taint oncommon
For earls to git the mitten),
That you've ben shipped by sum young woman,
And now yer heart is splittin'.

Peace to yer ashes, sleepin' swine,
Dear broken-hearted creetur,
'Tis Milly Ruggles, writes these lines,
When mornin' cums ye'll meet her.

When Ide writ this affectin' poem, I laid it in Pike's Rithmetick I see lyin' there; then I turned to take one more look of the young man abed — and whether or no the lontern shinin' in his eyes woke him up or not I don't know; enny how he opened his eyes and lookt up at me; arter starin' at me a spell with the biggest wonderation depictered on his phizziogermy, says he to me, says he, "Jimmini! who in the name of wonder be you?"

"Don't ax who I be," says I, "jest look in Pike's rithmetick and thattle giv ye the *denowment* who I be."

"Pike's Rithmetic," says he, "I know a man about my size that can find out eeny most ennything by studdyin' out on't — but by gum! I don't see how Ime to find who you be if I cipher out on't from now to next never."

"Well," says I, "you look right next the kiver and you'll see." So sayin' I made a curchy and vanished into t'other room leavin' my lontern behind.

Arter I went out I listend to the door and heerd him git up and go to the table and read the confusion out loud.

Arter he'd read it, says he, "Jimmini!" a number of times — then I heerd him a mendin' a pen — and then he begun to write and writ for ever so long. At last I got tired listenin', so I tho't Ide set down agin; but as I went to beseat myself I got on the wrong eend of the cheer —

(ye know 'twas turned down) — and it let me right onto the floor, and it made sich a rackit it woke up Zady, and she hollerd out, "Grandfer Griffin! what in natur's to pay?" I never said a word. "Arter all," solliquized she, "mabby 'twan't nothin' but me dreamin'." So sayin' she gin two or three grunts and turned over and went to sleep agin. So I got up, fixt the cheer, and sot down strait, laid my head on the table and went to sleep, and dident wake up agin till mornin'; and then my neck was so stiff holdin' on't so long in that betwistid persition that I couldent scerce move it for ever so long. As soon as it got limberd a little I riz and arrannged my dress and went down stairs, leavin' Zady sound asleep. The man and woman was up, and arter a spell Zady got up and cum thumpin' down. I was settin' behind the door so she dident see me, and she took tew pails and went off to milkin', and the woman begun to get breckfust, and says she, "Young woman, ye'll have to be sairved as the rest on us be — for the master's got to have the silver spoon and the chany teacup and sarcer."

"Well, I don't ker," says I, "Amandy had to drink ut of a noggin to old Byrnes."

"Who had tew?" says she.

"Amandy Fitzalan," says I.

"Sumbody I don't know," says she.

Then she went out to pull sum inyons, and whilst she was gone the master cum down — he dident see me — so I kehawked and he lookt round.

"Good mornin', Miss Ruggles," says he, makin' a scrapin' bow.

"Good mornin' to yer lordship," says I, curchyin'.

Says he, "I feel extrornary honored by the visit ye

made me last night — and that poitry! Jimmini, it's fine! I couldent rest till Ide writ an anser to it — for Ime a poit of considerble merrit myself — I've had a number of articles printed in that are well-conductid perryodical, the Mohawk Meteor and Marcy Republican. You've ondoubtidly seen and admired the poetical countributions signed 'The Mudbow Minstrel;' them's mine. I'm no strannger to yer repitation, Miss Ruggles, for Ime an intimit frind of young Spriggins — a gret admirer of yourn — and he and I corrisponds; his pistles is full of your praises, so that my curiosity to behold ye had arriven to a wonderful pitch, but Ide no idee of it's bein gratifacted in the interestin' monner it was by yer morantic visitation last night."

"But," says I, interruptin' him, "ye said how't ye writ an anser to my poim. I should like to see it."

So he put his hand in his pockit and took out a foldid paper containin' 45 amazin' putty vairses, and tho' it would take tew much time to coppy 'em all, I can't help substractin' a few on 'em. Arter guayne on to say how't he want asleep when I went into his room, but ony "pertendin' for to sleep," he continnys in the follerin monner:

"O! sich a face I never see
Sence I on airth was born!
'Twas brightest noonday's sun to me,
With blushing hues of morn.

"And then I seen you starin' round,
Jest like sum creetur's ghost,
That cum to find, from under ground,
Sumthin' it had lost.

"And then my pen I seen you take,
My paper, ink, and cheer,

And then set down all for to make
That poitry so dear.

"And o'er the sheet the pen you drew,
In rhyming fury dashing,
And from yer eyes the idees flew,
Like lightning bugs a flashing."

Here comes in a number of stanzys about Mister Shakespeare, rollin' frenzy, &c.; and then he goes on, —

"And when you'd got it writ, you took
And put it in my Pike —
That jewel of a ciphering book —
You must a knowd I like.

"By day I read that rithmetick,
It occerpies my slumbers,
'Twas there I learnt to rhyme so slick,
And got so skilled in numbers.

"My streekid sky's ben black and blue,
A world of botheration,
As you have ben, so I've ben through
A sight of tribulation."

Then he goes on to tell about his sorrers — how't he'd ben in love a number of times and always got the mitten, and so finally made up his mind not to try no more — but taint woth while to subscribe that part, as there's 18 vairses on't. So he continys, —

"Ah! Shakespeare says, — "

(I spose this Mr. Shakespeare's sum intimit frind of hissen.)

"Ah! Shakespeare says, and Shakespeare knew,
(To you and me that's plain) —
That true love never did run true,
But always cross the grain."

Then he goes on through a number of stanzys to discribe the oncerting natur of love — the coldness of the world in gineral, and the shemale sect in perticler — the trials that genyus has to undergo — and at last eends as follers, —

> "Now sence in rhyme my woes and struggles
> Ive had a chance to pour 'em,
> Ile jest subscribe myself, Miss Ruggles,
> Your friend, P. ZEBIDER GOBUM."

I dident read all the poitry then; I put it in my ridicule, and arter thankin' the master for't, says I, "I hope ye won't tell these folks about my guayne inter yer chomber last night; cause if ye dew they'll think the driver telld the truth when he said I was crazy."

"O! I won't mention it," says he, "but how on airth did you git here?"

I was jest a guayne to conform him, when Missis Hitchins and Zady and the old man cum in. Zady was bethunderstruck to see me, and they was all supprized enuff when the master introducted me to 'em. Arter that they was amazin' perlite. Well, we sot down to breckfust — but I must resairve whot concurred that day ('twas Sabberday ye know) for another chopter.

CHAPTER X.

"O! Sangerfield!
Where is thy shield
To gard agin grim death!
He aims his gun
At every one,
And fires away their breath!"

SANGERFIELD HUDDLE BARD.

ARTER breckfust I axed Mr. Hitchins if Hoky mut go arter my chist, and he said seein' 'twas me and seein' 'twas a case of necesserty he mought, tho' 'twas agin his principles to ride anywhere a Sabberday ony to meetin'. So Hoky he put on his Sundy clus, and tallerd his hair, and harnissed the hosses to the waggin and sot off for Utica, and he cum hum in about tew hours. Missis Hitchins axed me to go to meetin' with 'em — (they attendid dervine sairvice to New Hartford, about a mild from there,) but I telld her Ide ruther wait till arternoon, cause my chist hadent arrove yit.

"Well," says she, "we shant be hum a noontime, so how'll ye find the way to meetin'?"

"O!" says Mr. P. Zebidee Gorum, "Ile stay till arternoon and so go with Miss Ruggles."

"Well," says she, "if ye want anything to eat ye'll find a platter of nutcakes in the cubberd, and sum cheese on the buttry shelf."

So she aud Mr. Hitchins and Zady sot off for meetin',

and I and the master was left alone together, and we convairsed about things in gineral, and I discovered that Mr. Gorum was a young man of oncommon bright immagination and highly cultivated mind. I axed him to write me an ode on the death of my mother.

"Is yer mother dead?" says he.

"No," says I, "but I suspect she will be by the time I get hum." So sayin' I put my honkercher to my eyes, and was dretfully overcum for a spell.

Bymeby Hoky arrove with my chist, and as I was a guayne out in the stage that evenin' I reckond I wouldent have it carried up chomber. So I took out my kee and onlocked it, and took out sich articles as I contendid to put on, and went up into Zady's room and arrannged my apparril.

Beein' a very warm day I tho't I wouldn't wear no bunnit to mectin'. So I done up my auburn tressis with my high-toppt comb, tied my six black ostridge fethers together with a black ribbin and stuck 'em in my head — ye know I had on my black rottenette gownd — well, I rolled up the sleeves to make 'em look short, and put on my long black cambrick gloves, then I huv my black long shawl round my neck and pined it down on one sholder with a black bow with tew eends to't much as a yard and a half long, then I loopt the skeart of my gownd up on one side and pined a black bow on't and my dress was completed, and certingly if ever a creetur lookt interestin' I did that minnit in my mournin' habileations.

Arter I was drest I condesendid, and I never see a surprisder creetur than the master was — he was quite overcum with admireation, and declared that he never see a more charmin' appeerance than what I persented all in

black. Well he went into the buttry and brung me a piece of cheese on a fork, and then he went to the cubberd and fetched me a wonderful long nutcake on another fork. Then he helpt himself and arter we'd eat 'em he said 'twas time to be guayne. So I took my parrysol and we lockt arms and off we sot for meetin, and I don't bleeve that tew more interestin' beeins ever prerambleated the scruburbs of New Hartford afore or sen. Mr. Gorum was drest with the biggest taste; he had on a long-tailed yaller thin coat and nankeen trowsis. Well, we walkt purty slow and when we got to meetin' the folks had most on 'em arrove there, and as he walkt up the broad ile the people stared at us as if they was bethunderstruck. The minister was a readin' the sam and he stoppt as much as a minnit; but Missis Hitchins and Zady was surprisder than anybody else. I never extracted so much attention in my life as I did that day in the New Hartford presbiteerian meetin' house — once in the sairmon the minister illuded to the sorrers and disappintments of airth, and I groaned out loud, and everybody lookt round at me, and sum onfeelin folks lafft; then the minister he lookt awful mad, and stoppin' right short in his dizcourse, says he, "My frinds, the sanctooerry aint no place to be merry." So they stoppt laffin, and the men folks ginerally stoppt starin', but the wimmin folks couldent help peekin' round once in a while.

Bymeby meetin' was out and we went hum, and arter tea I arrannged my dress for travellin', and about six o'clock the stage cum along. I axed Mr. Hitchins what was the dammidge, but he wouldent take nothin'. So I thanked him and then I had a very affectionit partin' with Mr. Gorum, (he was ividently took with me) and then I

got into the stage and startid for Podunk. There was five men folks in the stage; all on 'em oncommon ruffins but one, and he was sich an attracktyve man I can't help describin' on him; he had a very dignified but summat stairrin' phizziogermy — tho' when he addrested himself to me a brand smile played over his feeters — but I never see the beat of his conversationable powers afore nor sen. The other passengers was electrificated by his eloquation, and dident say but very little, and no wonder! He was talkin' about Utica when I got in, and it was ivident that he was a resider of that citty.

"Gentlemen," says he, "our citty is the sentre of the State — I may say of the United States. It is as remarkerble for its intairnal arranngements as it is for the inlightenment and infermation of its inhabiters. It is in all respects very fur previous to Phelidelphy. New York itself can't hold a candle to it. Gentlemen! where will ye find such refinement of monners and eleguance of appeerence as the ladies of our city pozzess? and where sich intellectitude of mind — sich profoundity of tallents — sich overwhelming and captivatin' abillyties as our men of sighence egsibit? our young men partickleary — I may safely say they are previous to any other young men in the United States, and subzequent to nun in the univairse." Then turning to me with a ravishin' smile, says he, "Mum, have ye ever been in Utica, mum?"

"Yis," says I, syin' "I was there yisterday under very distressin' circumstences."

"Ah!" says he, with a very greaceful inclineation of his boddy, "may I enquire what distressin' ok-kurrence ok-kurred?" So I recountered the hull of my history from beginnin' to eend, and when Ide finnishid, says he, with another greaceful inclineation, —

"It seems to me, mum, you've ben the artifisher of yer own misfortins by givin' way to the sensibilitude with which you are indewed by natur' — the egshuberance of your immaggination and vivacitude of your sperrits has intirely outstript your discretionery powers, mum."

Jest then we cum to Little Falls, and the four codgers got out and a remarkerble ginteel woman and a little boy about five year old got in. It was considerble dark and I couldent see her feeters extinctly, but putty soon she spoke to the little boy, and I recognatid her voice in a minnit.

"Goody gracious, Miss Van Dusen!" says I.

"Mairciful heavens! my dear Permilly!" says she — and we huv ourselves into one another's arms.

O! if there is a minnit when the heart-broken sperrit feels as if it would go off the handle with joy, 'tis when long severatid frinds onexpectedly meets! For a spell we strainded one another in a silent imbrace without utteratin' a sillybull ony jackilation — "O! Miss Van Dusen!" "O! Permilly!" — at which Mr. Spluttergut, the gentleman from Utica, seemed much affectid. When we was recoveratid from our jouful supprise I axed her where she was guayne, and she conformed me that she was a guayne to visit her relatyves in Durrup, and that she had ben married a number of year to Squire Stokes, one of the fust men in Little Falls.

"Do tell!" says I, "and is this ere sweet little cherubim yer son?"

"Yis," anserd she, "my on'y son."

"What's yer name, you little darlin'?" says I, kissin' of him — but instid of anserin' he begun to beller, and his mother said he was dretful sensatyve; always cry'd when stranngers spoke to him — "his name's Lord Mortimer,"

continyd she, "I wantid to giv him a cognomer that wo'd sound well in congriss — I intend he shall write it 'L. Mortimer Stokes.'"

"Charmin' name," says I. Then she axed me where I was guayne? And I begun to the beginnin' of my history arter I left her siminary and tell'd her the hull, and she was very much affectid.

"O!" says she, "I knowd that yer sensatyve and morantic nater would have to suffer wonderfully from the cold onfeelin' world." Then she went on advisin' of me to recipperate Jabezes affection, sayin' that a heart like hisen was woth possessin', and more'n all that 'twas time I was settled down.

Well, bime-by we arrove to Durrup, (or Skenackedy, as sum calls it,) and Missis Stokes invitid me to accompanate her to her father-in-law's and beein' eeny most tired out, for we'de rid all night, I thought I would. So we got out and I axed Mr. Spluttergut to call on me if ever he cum our way, and he wantid to be conformed where I resided; and I tell'd him in the villidge of Podunk. "Ah, egzactly," says he, with a greaceful inclineation, "I remember the loquation very well now — it's a short distance previous to Schaticoke."

"Jest so," says I. So then we sepperatid, and I never see a bow that was a sircumstence to the one he made at our partin'.

Then my former instructoress and me winded our way to Mr. Stokesis, and the old folks was wonderful glad to see Silly, as they called her, (her name was Prisilly naterally,) and I raly tho't they'd eat up little Lord Mortimer, and they was very perlite to me tew, and said that if Ide stay till arter dinner they'de send me hum in their waggin,

and so I concludid I would, "tho' ev'ry minnit," jackilatid I, "that restrains me from my adored mother seems like an etarnity of a hundred year." Well, we had dinner, and then Philo Stokes — the old folksis youngest son — got the waggin reddy, and arter tellin' the Stokesis to cum to Podunk, Missis Silly Stokes pertickleary, and imbracin' her tenderly, I and my chist, and Philo set off for Podunk. We got there about 4 o'clock, and as we was a drivin' into the villidge, I cryin' and ringin' my hands distractiously, we met Mr. Smith, the onfeelin' postmaster, and says he, —

"No wonder ye cry; ye've ben the means of yer poor mother" —

"Ben the means on her," says I.

"Yis," anserd he, "Missis Smith says she haint a doubt but what 'twas takin' on about you sot her into the dizorder she died on — she was berried yesterday."

When he said that I sunk faintin' away in the bottom of the waggin — jest as Amandy did when her father died — and I remaindid onsensible till we got to father's. Philo was eny most skeart to death. "What ails ye?" says he.

"I've faintid away," retorterd I, "ye must git sumbody to help ye lift me out when we git to father's." So he druv as tight as ever he could and eny most jolted me to death, and seein' father to work in the feeld he hollered to him.

"Hullo! Mr. Ruggles, cum and help git yer dorter out of the waggin — she says she's faintid away." So father he cum, and he and Philo hawld me out head fust and eny most kilt me doin' on't. Ketury she cum runnin' out, and with her resistence I manidged to git into the house and onto the bed. Ketury she sot down aside of me

and father he sot down and went to mendin' the hoe handle.

Arter Ide staid onsensible a spell, I open'd my eyes and says I, "Is it true that my belovid mother's dead?" "Yis," says father says he, "dead as a door nail, and I hope now you've cum hum ye'll try to behave better'n ye did afore ye went away — there's enuff to be did; for sen Mirtilly got marrid, ev'ry thing's gone to rack."

"Mirtilly marrid?" interrigorid I.

"Yis," says father, "she's marrid marchant Van Snorter — and did well tew — he's a makin' money fast."

"Grandfer grievous!" says I, "well, I 'spose Jake jest took her 'cause she was my sister; but she's a fool to git marrid so young, she's six year younger'n I be."

"She may be," says father, "and not be no chicken nyther — the fact is, Milly, you're gittin' along, and Ile bet a beef critter ye'll be an old maid."

"Me an old maid?" says I, "Ile tell ye what, old feller, there's more young men than you could shake a stick at that would jump sky high to git me."

"I gess they'de jump sky high *arter* they'de got ye." says he.

I lookt at my hoggish payrent with a look of suverin' contemp, and riz up and went into my chomber — Ketury follerin' — and I tell'd Ketury I wanted to visit my mother's grave, and she said she'd go long. So I huv Ketury's black vail over my head — put my pencil and paper in my ridicule — and we sot off. As we went along, me groanin' and sobbin' the wost way, ev'ryboddy stared out of the housen at me; but I never lookt at nobody. Well, we cum to the grave-yard and clum over the fence and went up to mother's grave. It had ben a rainin' and the grass

was as wet as muck, but what did I ker! I huv myself onto the ground and gin utteration to my greef jest as Amandy did at her mother's grave. "O!" says I, "it would a ben better if this spot had a receeved both the mother and the dorter at the same minnit; better by a jug full than for me to live to mourn over blastid hops and agonizin' vikissitudes! but how perzumptuous am I to ropine at the will of creation!" Sich was my words at my mother's grave, where I sot

"Like a fair lilly surcharged with tears.'*

Then I tell'd Ketury she needent wait for me — so she went hum — and I took out my pencil and paper and writ the follerin' stanzys in about 15 minnits:

THE DISAPPINTED.

"O! what a cat-a-strophy dire
In Podunk did befall,
When she was called for to ixpire,
And leave us mournin' all.

O! never was there greef afore
Like that of poor Permilly:
That fair and interestin' flower:
That pale and droopin' lilly.

My heart is broke; my P. estrannged,
My fond affections crushed,
My plans of futur' bliss derannged,
And all my prospects squshed.

The world onfeelin', cruil, cold,
Looks on with wonderin' eye,
My misery for to behold —
I certingly shall die.

* Childern of the Abby: don't remember which chopter.

And when at last my heart-strings snap,
And all my woes is dun,
O take the follerin' epitap
And 'scribe it on my stun:

"O! strannger, stop and wipe yer eyes,
And spend a minnit weepin';
A broken-hearted sperrit lies
Beneath this tombstun sleepin'."

I soon arter sent these vairses to Mr. Gorum, and he had 'em insairted in "The Mohawk Meteor and Marcy Republican," with the followin' paragrab atop of 'em.

"The insuin' eloquant and touchin' stanzys are from the quill of a young lady, who, tho' yit in the highday of youthful facksination, is ividently dyin' of a broken heart — her most sangunary prospects blited in the bud. What heart will not bust! What soul will not dissolve! What gizzard will not split, on perusin' 'em — dictatid as they be by ginnuine inspireation." Arter Ide compleatid 'em I returned to the poternal ruff.

NOTE A BEAN. — Mr. eddyter: In gineral I've been very much gratifacted by the monner in which you or your men folks has printid my life; there ain't but jest one thing I feel to complain on, and that is, the way ye spell my mother's name. 'Twant Vine nore Ving, as it's ben onvariably printid in your paper, but it was *Viny*. I ony write this for to let folks know how't my moternal payrent hadent sich a barbarious cognomer as what they spose for.

CHAPTER XI.

"Now the capting loved her dearly,
Loved her as he did his life,
And seein' she was left so drearly,
Sally became the capting's wife."

WELL, tew weeks passed away in the most molancholy monner — the state of my mind wouldent admit me to ingage in no occerpation if Ide a wanted tew. Father he jawed cause I dident work, and Nadab and Abihu made fun on me. I dident do nothin' but romble in the woods and medders mournin' and making poitry. On the hull my sittyation was most miserably interestin'. I tell ye I mist the Childern of the Abby (Spriggins had it ye know). If Ide a had that twould a ben a gret comfort to me, and the circumstence of my thinkin' so much about the enchantin' vollums conduced me sumtimes to think about the swine Ide lent 'em tew, and thinks me, he's more like Lord Mortimer arter all than ary feller I ever knowd, for he sticks to me thro' thick and thin jest as Lord Mortimer did to Amandy, and then I rememberd Missis Stokeses advice to me in the stage, and puttin' all things together, my feelins was considerable channged, and I felt my sentimints towerds the youthful Jabez grown oncommon tender.

O! woman is a fraggle and lovin' creetur. The shemale heart is so chuck full of affection that its purty on-

possible to use it all up on one bein'. Who, I ax, would want to live in this ere cold, onfeelin' world without a kindred sperret to share its joys and sorrers with? and when the swine that a young woman has placed her affections on prove onconstant it's a pity if she maytent bestow her heart on another more worthier one, and I haint a speck of doubt but what Amandy'd a married Sir Charles Bingley if Lord Mortimer had a ben raly faithless, and it's a pity if I've got to be a dried up old maid jest a cause Philander got married.

Sich was my circumflexions as I sot one day under the gret ellum tree that growd afore our house. I must a lookt very interestin' a settin' there in profound ponderation. I had on a black skeart, and over it my white long short with a row of black crape loopt up round the bottom on't; then I had my leno vail wound round my head for a turbin, and my ostridge fethers stuck into't, and there I sot a leanin' on my elbow, now sythin' and now wipin' off a tear that strickled down my cheek. Arter continuin' my medifications a spell, I took out my pencil and writ the follerin' piece of blank poitry: —

A FRAGMENT.

O! she was fair! no anngel ever was
Nor ever could be fairer than Permilly;
Her auburn hair in greaceful tresses did
Hang down upon her sholders only jest
When she did stick it up with her high comb.
Her eyes was blue, her skin was snowy, and
Her cheeks was red as roses only jest
When she was in distress, then they was as
White as tew lillies: but neverstandin' all
Her beauty and her charms, she had as much
Trouble as any creetur ever had.
The swine she loved so well was faithless and
Went off and wed another maid; and then

It seemd as if Permilly's heart would bust.
O! what a tender thing the shemale heart is!
So crammin', jammin', full of love and truth,
And faith, and hope, and pure affection, and
Some other things too numerous to mention!
No wonder when it's stuft so dretful full
A little blow should bust it — for it must
Be ivident to all obsairvin' folks
That when it's filld so full, the skin outside
Must be streckt dretfully and always in
Danger of bustin'. — So Permilly's heart
Has bust, and all the overplus run out,
But still there's quite a considerable of
Love and affection in it yit, and she
Has purty nigh made up her mind to giv
What's left to some more worthier object than
The faithless one. O! haste upon the wings of
Love, my dear Jabez — your Permilly feels as
If she could scarcely wait a minnit longer
For to behold thee, Jabez — Jabez, haste.

When Ide finished writin' the oversuin' lines I was jest a guayne to retire into the house when I heerd sumbody blowin' his nose; so I lookt up the road and as sure as Ime a livin' creetur 'twas Jabez Spriggins a hossback. The minnit I see him I run down street to meet him, and when he see me cummin' he got right off his hoss and cum towerds me. Well, I run right up and ketcht holt on him, exclamigatin', "O! my Jabez! I'me overjoiced to see ye."

He lookt wonderful supprised, and says he, "I dident suspect to find ye so cosy, but I'm darned glad ye be. The minnit I heerd ye'd cum hum I detairmined to follow ye, but I had to wait till my quarter was out afore I could cum, and the fust day arter my quarter was out I got on my creetur and sot off arter ye for fear I should lose ye if I dident hurry — I've got that are speech of Lord Morti-

mer's all by heart; ben a sayin' on't over all along the roads so's not to forgit it, and I ruther guess I can say the hull on't without missin' a word."

Well, I rushered him into the square room and sot down, and he cum up to me and says he to me, "To call you mine is the haight of my wishes — on your derision! I rest for happiness. O! my Amandy!" —

"Say 'O! my Permilly!'" says I.

"O! my Permilly! — O! my Permilly! — there I swon I've got up a stump," says he.

"No matter," says I, "you've proved to my satisfication the devotedness of yer attachment, and Ile be yourn."

"Will, hay?" says he.

"Yis," says I, "now ye must imprint a kiss on my rosy cheek." So he went to kiss me and whiskt off my turbin. Arter Ide got my turbin adjested agin, says he, "Well, when will you be reddy to git married?"

"Right off," says I.

"Well," says he, "Ile go and talk to the old man about it."

"No, ye needn't," says I, "father never'll consent on airth — he's dretfully oppozed to my gittin' married — but Ile have ye neverstandin', and Ile tell ye how we'll manage. You git on yer hoss and go strait to Utica and wait there till I cum, and Ile contrive to get there afore long."

"That's the checker," says he.

So he surmounted his hoss and rid off, and I went in and telld Ketury all about it, cause I knowd she wouldent tell nobody. Says I, "I shall clear right out, and if father axes arter me you tell him I've gone over to Skaticoke to see Mirtilly" (Mirtilly had moved to Skaticoke). Ketury was dretful pleased and said she'd do jest as I telld her to;

and she promised to have my chist sent over to me as soon as possible. So she and I we took a gret work pockit and put my consairns into't that I wantid to be married in — then I put on my travellin' habileations and arter imbracin' Ketury I sot off for Dorrup. Well, 'twas five mile there, and when I got there the stage had went out. So I went over to old Mister Stokeses and telld 'em Ide found my mother dead and concluded to go right back to Higgins Patent cause Ide ort to be in my simminary. Well, they telld me that old Mr. Stokes was a guayne to Utica in the mornin' on bizness in his own waggin, and if I was a mind to I mut go with him. "Well," says I, "I reckon I will."

"But," says Missis Stokes, "where's yer chist?"

"O!" says I, "I reckond I wouldent be bothered with it, and they're a guayne to send it on." Well, I stayd there all night, and in the mornin' we sot off for Utica. Old Stokes dident drive very tight, and so we was three days a guayne to Utica — but as I want to eend my Recollections in this chopter, I won't tell nothin' about the jerney, tho' it was quite eventerful.

We arrove to Utica jest at the edge of the evenin' and stoppt to Baggsis tavern, and I axt for a room and then I drest myself as follers. I opend my gret ridicule and took out my white long short and put it on, and thinkin' Ide ort to have sum colors about me I betwisted a yaller ribbin round the black crape trimmin' on the bottom on't — then I put on my blue sash, and huv my artifishel reath kerlessly round my sholders, then I done up my hair with my high-toppt comb — took my leno vail and fastened one eend on't into my comb, and so let it float over my sholders — then I stuck my six ostridge fethers in on side of

my comb, and tied a pink ribbin round my head to keep 'em in — and I tell ye I did look compleat.

Beein' thus attired I took my parrysol and sot out to look up Spriggins, and you never in all yer born days see sich a starin' as there was whilst I walkt up Ginnisee Street — everybody cum to the doors and winders, and ever so menny men and boys followerd arter me a hoorawin' and makin' a turrible fuss — but I was so akustomed to admireation I didn't mind it a bit, but plummenaded along with the biggest onconsairn and dignitude. Well, arter preambleatin' a number of streets, finally I cum round to a place they called the "Reading Room," and I stopt to the door and looked in. The room was full of gentlemen, and as sure as a gun, in the midst on 'em was Mister Spluttergut (the gentleman I met in the stage), and he was a harangewin on 'em with the most oncomparalleled eloquence, and they was all a listenin' with the biggest attention.

Well, whilst I was a listenin' to the surprisin' and captivatin' sentiments he pored forth consairnin' railroads and canawls, I see suthin' yaller a stickin' up amonkst a mess of heads in the fur eend of the room, and whilst I was a wonderin' what 'twas, the heads moved, and lo and behold! 'twas the tip top of Jabezes hair. As soon as I see him I skriekt out, "My Jabez! My Jabez!" and rushed into the room — Jabez he see me and he lookt surprised enuff — we squoze thro' the men, and when we reacht one another I huv myself faintin' into the arms of my adorin' Spriggins. I never see a surprisder set of folks than the men in the Utica Readin' Room was that minnit. They all gin way and fixt a seat for me — even Mister Spluttergut stopt his harangew, exclamigatin', "Quite an ok-kurrence."

Well, arter a spell one of the young men hild a lit segar to my nose, and that fetcht me tew. So I riz up and takin' hold of Sprigginses arm we perceedid to Baggses hotel. Arter we arrove there Jabez axed me whether Ide be married there or wait till we got to Higgins Patent.

"O here, certingly," says I, "in this ere celebrated hotel — in the ginteelest sitty in creation."

So Spriggins went arter the justice, and there we was marrid. As soon as the serrymony was overdone, husband he calld for some pie and cheeze, and after weed eat it he brung up his hoss, and as soon as Ide arrannged my travellin' dress, he surmounted his creetur, and I, resisted by a number of gentlemen, got on behind him, and I swonny I bleeve the hull town of Utica was collectid to see us go, and when we whipt up the hoss and sot off, they gin three all-to-pieces cheers, in honor of us. Well, we went as fast as the hoss could go with sich an oncommon heft and arrove to Higgins Patent about leven o'clock at night. Mother and Father Spriggins was abed, but they got up and I tell ye they was awful glad to see me. The next arternoon Aunt Huldy made quite an extensyve set down for me, and if I dident cut a sworth it's no matter. But I hadent ort to be tellin' what took place arter we was marrid — 'cause the Childern of the Abby don't say a word consairnin Amandy arter her marridge — no more don't no other novil I ever read say nothin' about the herowines arter they git marrid. Howsumever, I can't help tellin' how't we took a bridle tour the next week to all the most celebratid places in the kentry — Utica, Rome, Whitesburrow, Sockwait Springs, and Verona Spa — and I kept a jernal along the road, and when P. Zebidee Gorum cum a visitin' to see us I show'd it to him, and it affordid him

the biggest satisfication; and it's in my persession yit — and mabby at sum futur day Ile lay it afore the public.

"The eend of all the woes and struggles,
And trials of Permilly Ruggles."

NOTE A BEAN. — Mister eddyter: You ondoutedly know that arter injoyin' 15 year of the biggest conjuggial felicitude, my adored companion, my beloved Jabez, was took from me by a dizeaze in the spine of his back; but mabby you've never ben conformed that arter mournin' the wost way for several year I finally united my destination to that of P. Zebidee Gorum, (now deacon Gorum,) he havin' ben married and lost his pardner. My Recollections was writ durin' the mawlancolly perriod of my widderhood — but as the circumstences attendin' my second marriage was quite interestin', the deacon has advised me to write an account on 'em for the bennefit of the risin' gineration; so if ever you git run ashore for stuff to put in yer paper, jest let me know, and if I aint too much occerpied with my domestic abberations, Ile be happy to giv ye sum account of my "*second love.*"

Yourn to everlastin'

PERMILLY R. SPRIGGINS GORUM.

MARY ELMER,

OR

TRIALS AND CHANGES.

MARY ELMER,

OR

TRIALS AND CHANGES.

CHAPTER I.

"WHAT modest-looking white house that stands somewhat isolated, whose is it? It seems the abode of ease without pretension."

It belongs to Mrs. Lee, widow of Dr. Lee, whose sudden death, some fifteen years ago, cast a gloom over the whole community. He was in the prime of life. Talent and probity had raised him to an enviable standing in his profession, when by the mysterious ordering of Divine Providence, he was cut off without a moment's warning. Yet not, we trust, without preparation, for one whose life, like his, is a constant exercise of Christian virtues, cannot be unprepared for death, however or whenever it may arrest him.

He had just returned from visiting some distant patients, and was caressing his only child, when Mrs. Lee left the room to make preparations for tea. A few moments after, little Mary came running out, crying:

"Mamma, I can't wake papa, do come and help me wake papa!"

Mrs. Lee supposed, however, that he had fallen asleep through weariness, and telling the little girl "not to disturb papa," took her by the hand and led her softly back into the apartment. But what a sight was she destined to behold! Her husband had sunk back in his chair — and, one glance at his face revealed the awful certainty — he was dead! A piercing shriek rang through the house, and then for many hours the wretched woman knew nothing of what was passing around her. The horror and agony of the first hour of returning consciousness, I could not, if I would, depict.

It was long, very long, before she recovered from the shock, for she had loved her husband devotedly. Yet after his death she felt that she had not fully appreciated his noble character. She knew not all his excellence until he was gone. None but herself thought that Margaret Lee had failed in any duty towards the departed. He had never thought so. And yet before her mind arose a thousand little errors and delinquencies, which her tender conscience magnified into great faults and failures resulting from gross selfishness. She did not say, as many would in a like affliction, "He was my idol and therefore Heaven has taken him from me." But she said, in the bitterness of her heart, "I did not love him as I ought. I did not do half that I might have done to make him happy, and thus am I punished."

The weight of such a sorrow would have crushed her, had not the care of her little daughter contributed to divert her thoughts from running always in the same dark channel. There had been a wonderful affection between

this child and her father, whom she strongly resembled both in features and disposition. She was but three years old when he died, and for some time she could not comprehend that he was to return no more. At every sound of a carriage, or step in the hall, she would run out to meet "papa." When at length she was made to understand that he could not come back to her, but that if she was a good girl she would one day go to him, she gave up looking for her father, and seemed only desirous to be very good, that she might go to him. Many times in the day she would go to her mother, and folding her arms upon her knee would say, "Now mamma tell Mary about papa." And then the heart-broken mother told her of her father, and the blessed place where he was waiting for them both. As she looked at the bright little being who stood with her dimpled hands resting on her mother's lap, and her deep, thoughtful eyes turned up so earnestly to her face; she trembled that one so pure and sinless should be left to her weak and erring guidance.

"But God has committed her to me," said she, "and He will help me." And earnestly did she pray for His help.

Every evening when her mother was undressing her, the little one never failed to ask the question, "Mamma, has Mary been a good girl to-day?" And on receiving an approving answer, she would say her prayer and go to sleep very happy.

A few months after her father's death she was stricken with the scarlet fever. For two days she suffered intensely, and appeared scarcely conscious of anything save her own pain. On the third, at evening, this abated, and

the little girl as she lay in her mother's arms, looked up and said faintly:

"Mamma, has Mary been a good girl to-day?"

Mrs. Lee pressed the precious child to her bosom and whispered, "Yes, darling, Mary is always a dear, good little girl."

An expression of perfect peace passed over the cherub face. She murmured her childish prayer and then — fell asleep — a long, quiet sleep it was, from which she awaked in Paradise.

Who can understand the utter desolateness of the childless widow as she sat alone in her solitary dwelling, from which she felt that light and joy were forever departed! And yet there was no other place on earth so dear to her. It was the home whither she had come a bride, but a few years before, and those few years had been by far the happiest of her life. The happiest — yet clouded by the greatest sorrow she had ever known. And here she resolved to pass the rest of her days. She therefore rejected all solicitations to return to the east, her former home, and where her only surviving near relation, a sister, still resided.

This sister who was many years older than Mrs. Lee, had married very rich, and her family lived in a style and moved in a circle wholly at variance with Mrs. Lee's taste and circumstances. An annual visit of a few weeks was all that she would promise them. From this visit she always returned eagerly to her own unostentatious home, and the graves of her buried treasures.

She no longer mingled in general society; it had lost all attraction for her. Her visits were mostly visits of mercy. She was not rich, but her income was much more

than sufficient for her own expenditure; and the overplus she devoted to charity. She was not like those careful far-seeing persons who are always laying in store for a "rainy day" to come, such days were constantly falling in her pathway. They were the suffering and the needy, and she thanked Heaven that one consolation remained to her in the midst of her afflictions — the power sometimes to alleviate those of others. She had few intimate friends, for although there was that in her grief which invited sympathy, the dignity of her manner checked all familiarity; and those few only knew the real humility and sweetness of her character.

Year after year passed away, and Mrs. Lee remained the same. Unchanged in her simple habits and retiring manners. Unchanged in her quiet, unobtrusive way of doing good. Unchanged in her silent sorrow. Unchanged in her mourning dress. She was a wonder to many who knew that with her youth, her appearance, and her station, she might, if she chose, be the idol of a flattering crowd, the leader of fashionable society. And they thought it "astonishing that she didn't at least go into *second mourning*, which would be so much more becoming to her style of beauty."

And so, with her loneliness and her prayers, her communings with the departed and her labors of love, we will leave her awhile.

In the outskirts of the same town, or what was then the outskirts, stood a poor old house, which has long since been demolished to make way for new ones. Old and poor it certainly was, but still neat and comfortable. And in it dwelt another widow and her only daughter. Mrs. Grant had been the wife of an industrious and thriving

mechanic, who left a prosperous business in a small village not far distant, and came hither in the hope of doing better. But unfortunately he soon fell into intemperate habits — wasted his little property — died miserably and left his wife and child to struggle with poverty as best they might.

Susan, the girl, was too young then to do much, and Mrs. Grant was obliged to work very hard to maintain them both, and pay the rent of her small tenement. But as Susan grew older she became very useful. When she was thirteen or fourteen years of age, she learned the business of dress-making; and in a few years was able to earn a comfortable subsistence for herself and her mother. The latter through anxiety and over-exertion, had become prematurely infirm, and was only equal to the discharge of her own household duties. These she performed while Susan went her daily rounds amongst her employers. The evenings they passed happily together.

Mrs. Grant was a truly religious woman, and she had trained her daughter to piety and an abhorrence of everything that is evil. The young girl was often thrown in the way of temptation as she pursued her calling, but she overcame it, and grew up good and virtuous, a pattern of neatness and quiet industry. Everybody liked Susan Grant. And when at length she married, almost everybody thought she had done remarkably well to get George Elmer, a young man of excellent principles and great activity. In fact one who was called a very "enterprising young man."

There were some, however, who pronounced him "visionary." That is, wanting in stability and perseverance. For although he was both active and intelligent, and

always engaged in some sort of business, he never followed any one occupation long enough to acquire much proficiency, or realize much profit in it.

He had been a carpenter, a printer, a merchant's clerk, had studied medicine a short time, law a still shorter time, and had abandoned the last for dentistry, in which he was engaged at the time of his marriage. Thus he went from one thing to another, never exactly failing in any, but always relinquishing each for something else which his sanguine nature imagined would prove much more lucrative.

With this propensity to change, it is not surprising that George Elmer laid up little or nothing. His family was always comfortable it is true. But that was the result of Susan's good management more than of his. Still he was a very kind husband and father, and there was nowhere a happier family to be found than theirs.

Susan's mother lived with them, and was regarded by the affectionate young couple as a great blessing and comfort. She did indeed make herself useful in many ways, particularly in sharing with Susan the care of the children, — of whom there were two, — bright pretty little creatures as ever blessed a fireside.

When these were about six and four years old, George, who had long since given up dentistry for something else, and that again for something else, bought out a daguerrian who was going to California, and began the business on his own account.

For several months he worked vigorously at it, making wretched likenesses, having a world of trouble with his "chemicals," and consequently very little patronage, as

there was a rival professor in the place, whose skill was unquestioned.

But at length his efforts were crowned with success. He fairly mastered the art. His "chemicals" worked admirably, and he turned out pictures that were more life-like than the originals themselves. His "Daguerrian Gallery" became famous, and that of his rival dwindled into insignificance. He had plenty to do. His pictures commanded a good price. His circumstances began visibly to improve, and he felt warranted in taking a larger and more commodious house for his family.

Such was the state of things, when George Elmer suddenly resolved to follow the example of his illustrious predecessor, and go to seek his fortune in California. This was in the early stage of the "gold excitement." The daguerrian had not been heard from. But one other individual had gone from the same place, — a shoemaker, the first who had ventured, — and wonderful accounts of his success had travelled back.

Susan Elmer heard the announcement of her husband's intention with a heavy heart. She tried to dissuade him from the undertaking. The perils of the journey, the dangers of the climate, the uncertainty of success, and the unavoidably long separation from his family in any case, all these she represented to him, but in vain. He saw no possibility of failure. His mind was made up.

"O George," said she, "we are doing well enough. You are just beginning to realize something from your present business, with a prospect of making a handsome support in time."

"O but it takes such an everlasting while to get rich here. I can make more in California in one year than I

could here in my whole life-time. Just think of Smith, the shoemaker! he's making money like dirt. I don't mean to be away over a year, and a year's soon gone you know. And then — hurrah, Susy! we'll roll in gold dust!"

Little Johnny who stood beside his mother, sobbing out of sympathy with her, thought "*that* wouldn't be nice at all, it wasn't pretty to roll in dust."

"We shall see, my son," said his father patting his head, "we shall see."

Susan was silenced but not convinced. She saw that her husband was fully resolved upon going. She therefore ceased her opposition and went to work diligently to prepare his wardrobe. But despite her efforts to look on the bright side of things, she had many sad forebodings. And so had Mrs. Grant. She thought it a great risk to run for a very small gain.

Elmer sold out his daguerrian apparatus for much less than it cost him, settled up his business, and prepared to take his departure. Susan proposed that he should carry with him his case of dentist's instruments. "It won't take a great deal of room," she said, "and you may find it necessary to do something besides dig for gold, before you come back."

George laughed and said, "So I suppose you think that the little I do succeed in turning up would be profitably left behind in people's teeth."

But Susan, when she packed his trunk, put the case of instruments in the bottom, thinking that at least they would do no harm.

A sum of money that would have sufficed to support them all in comfort for a year or more under Susan's care-

ful management, was requisite for George Elmer's outfit and travelling expenses, consequently he was unable to leave them much. The man who had taken his daguerrian apparatus, a Mr. Green, — not long resident in the village — had not yet paid, but was to hand the money to Mrs. Elmer in the course of a week or two. This, George said, would be ample for all their expenses, until he should send them a supply, which he hoped to do before many months. And in a year or a year and a half at the farthest, "he would be with them again. And then they would have a house of their own — *such* a house too!"

And so George Elmer bade his wife and children farewell. With some tears it is true, for he loved them dearly, and it was for their sakes that he left them; yet with high hopes and brilliant anticipations of a golden future. Poor Susan could not speak at all. The little ones cried aloud, and old Mrs. Grant as she pressed his hand in both her own, said with a trembling voice: "God bless you, my son, and bring you safely back again."

"Ask it of Him every day, mother," responded the young man, "and all of you pray for me daily till we meet again, as I surely shall for you. Keep up good courage 'twill not be long after all — a year is soon gone."

For some little time after George's departure, his family contrived to get along without incurring debts. But Susan's small stock rapidly decreased. The winter was at hand. Wood and many other necessaries ought to be purchased. But so far from being able to procure these, she had scarcely enough to supply their immediate wants. The man Green, to her great disappointment, had left the place without paying what he owed, and gone no one knew whither. Very soon after her husband went away, she

resumed her old occupation of dress-making, took the work in, and devoted to it every moment of time that she could spare from her other duties, which were rendered heavier by the increasing feebleness of her mother. The winter came. Another child was added to the little flock, — a nice boy. His mother looked sadly in his unconscious face and wondered "what would become of him."

"Trust in the Lord," said the grandmother.

"It is all I can do just now," Susan replied with a deep sigh. About this time the rent fell due. Mrs. Elmer had not the means to pay it. She therefore sold some of her furniture to meet this and other expenses, for she was resolved not to go into debt as long as it could possibly be avoided.

Soon after this her heart was gladdened by intelligence from George. He had reached San Francisco in safety, and was about to start for the "diggins," and trusted soon to send her some of the results of his labors. It was cheering to know that he was alive and well, and Susan plied her needle with renewed energy every moment that her baby did not require her attention. Mrs. Grant, though suffering under a slight paralysis, could still get about with a cane, and assist somewhat in the household labors. And Mary, the eldest child, was very good about amusing the little one, who fortunately was not at all fretful.

Still with all her exertions, it was very little that Susan could earn by sewing. She had not regained her former strength since the birth of her child. Never before had she sewed so steadily. She felt that it was undermining her health, but she was determined to struggle on and keep out of debt until the promised aid should come from her

husband. And what if she should receive no such aid? What if George after all should be unsuccessful and finally return as poor as he went away? At any rate, he should have no debts of hers to discharge, even though she should be obliged to part with every superfluity to avoid them.

As the winter wore on, expenses increased. The avails of Susan's labor were quite inadequate to meet them, and she accordingly sold several more articles of her furniture, thinking that if all should end well, their loss could be easily supplied.

The spring was somewhat advanced, when Smith, the shoemaker, returned from California, and brought news of George Elmer. But O, what news! He called to see Susan, and thus his story ran. Poor Elmer had died of the prevailing fever on the very day that Smith left San Francisco. He had become discouraged with digging for gold, gone to San Francisco, and returned to his former occupation of house building, which was very profitable there, and in which he would undoubtedly have done well, had he not been taken down with the fever which carried him off in a few days. Smith saw him the day before he came away. George then did not believe that his illness would terminate fatally, and hoped soon to resume his work. He sent many affectionate messages to his family, with a handsome gold brooch for Susan containing a lock of his hair and a daguerrotype likeness, and requested Smith to say to them that he should come home in six months or thereabouts.

"But we all knew," continued the narrator, "that he couldn't get well, he himself was the only one who had any hope. The doctor told me then that he couldn't live through the night. And so it proved. The next morning I heard he was dead."

During this recital Susan Elmer sat like one turned to stone. She uttered no cry. She spoke not a word. Nor did she look towards Mr. Smith, when he took his departure. The grandmother cried violently, and so did little Mary who was old enough to understand something of their loss. Johnny cried too. But for a long time Susan remained in that same immovable state, grasping the brooch as though it was all the world to her now.

I know not how long she would have sat thus, had not the baby awaked from a long sleep in its cradle and begun to cry. No mother's ear was ever deaf to such a sound. Susan took up her little one and attended to its wants, and then she wept. She remembered that it was fatherless.

"I'm glad to see you cry, my child," said her mother, "I feared you never would."

"I feared so too, mother," said Susan, "and I thank God that I can."

"Trust in the Lord," pursued the old woman. "He will not forsake us." Susan did not reply.

As soon after this sudden and great affliction as Susan could command her thoughts sufficiently for the task, she tried to fix upon some plan by which her expenses might be lessened, and her income increased. As a first step, she disposed of all of her remaining furniture excepting only the bare necessaries, and a small mantel clock, which had been George's gift to her on the last anniversary of their marriage. She then removed to a small house, or rather two rooms of a house not far distant, at a much lower rent, and though almost broken down with fatigue and sorrow, applied herself more constantly than ever to her needle. The poor have no time for *idle* grief.

CHAPTER II.

THE report of George Elmer's death soon reached Mrs. Lee. This lady, of whom the reader already knows something, had not heard of the family before. At least not particularly, for she resided at the opposite extremity of the place. She had visited Elmer's daguerrian rooms, and remembered the proprietor as an intelligent, well-mannered young man.

Had the poverty of the Elmers been generally known, she would long since have made acquaintance with them. But Susan was no complainer, and very few persons had any idea of their destitution. In fact none save those who had bought their furniture for less than half its real value. And they were not the ones likely to interest themselves in behalf of the poor.

But Mrs. Lee heard of George Elmer's death, heard how suddenly and unexpectedly the blow had fallen upon his poor wife. The name "widow" had always the power to elicit her deepest sympathy, and Mrs. Elmer's affliction affected her unusually. It was like the one great sorrow of her own life. So unlooked-for and overwhelming. Her heart went out towards the bereaved woman, and she resolved to go and see her.

Accordingly, after a few days, she inquired the way and went. It was after the family had removed. She knocked at the door of the humble dwelling, and was admitted by

Johnny, who showed her into the room where his mother and the rest were collected. Susan's sad, worn face was bent low over her sewing. The old mother was knitting socks at sixpence per pair for a neighboring variety store, and little Mary was holding the baby on her lap. When Mrs. Lee announced her name, Susan and her mother rose and welcomed her. They knew her by reputation.

"Mrs. Elmer," said Mrs. Lee, "I have heard of your affliction, and am come, not to intrude upon your grief, but to offer you the sympathy which none can so truly feel as those who have experienced a like sorrow."

Susan thanked her kind visitor, while tears flowed freely down her pale face. I need not repeat all the conversation which ensued. Susan was not a great talker, but the little she said impressed Mrs. Lee very favorably. As to the latter, she possessed the happy faculty of saying just enough, and just the right things. On this occasion she completely won Susan's heart; for she was free alike from that patronizing manner which offends the sensitive, and that haughtiness which repels them. After conversing some time with Mrs. Elmer and her mother, Mrs. Lee turned to the children, and taking from her pocket some sugar-plums, gave them to Johnny, telling him to divide them with his sister.

"But you see," said Johnny, who was a very loquacious little fellow, "she can't hold the sugar-plums and the baby too, so if you'll please to take Georgey, then I'll give her some."

Susan was somewhat alarmed at the boy's boldness, and was beginning to check him, when Mrs. Lee reassured her by saying, with a smile, to Johnny, —

"That's just what I want to do, if the baby will let me; I don't like to frighten babies and make them cry."

"O, but our baby don't cry at strangers," said the little boy eagerly, "he isn't afraid of anybody, he'll go to you and stay as long as you want him to."

"He looks like a good baby," Mrs. Lee replied; "bring him here, my dear, I'm a great friend to babies."

As the little girl advanced with the "infant prodigy," (as she and Johnny considered him,) Mrs. Lee observed her more particularly than she had done before. She was a very pretty child, and her deep blue eyes and light curling hair brought to the mind of the lonely lady the image of her own lost darling. She took the baby on her lap, and putting her arm round his sister, asked what was her name.

"Mary," the little girl answered.

Mrs. Lee's eyes filled with tears. She looked earnestly in the child's face for a moment, kissed her cheek, and then told her to go and get her share of the sugar-plums.

The baby fully sustained the reputation which Johnny had given him, by laughing and crowing at Mrs. Lee, and taking great liberties with her bonnet and shawl, to her evident satisfaction. She had a great fondness for children, although she was not wont to manifest it in the boisterous manner of some. But while apparently wholly occupied with the baby, she was not unobservant of the two older children who retired to a corner for the purpose of dividing her trifling gift. She was much pleased at the manner in which this was done.

Mary counted them (Johnny could not count so many) and divided them into two equal portions, one of which Johnny poured into her apron.

"And here's two more because you're the biggest," said he, taking a couple from his own share and adding them to hers.

But Mary objected to this arrangement. "No, Johnny, you must keep a whole half and two more because you're the littlest, you know;" and she put four of them back in her brother's apron.

"No, Mary, that isn't the way," Johnny began, and I know not how much longer they would have argued the point, had not a knock at the door interrupted them.

The new arrival was no less a personage than Mrs. Smith, wife of the returned shoemaker of that name. She lived not far from the Elmers' present abode, and having seen Mrs. Lee go there, thought she would take that occasion to make a *friendly* call, and find out the object of that lady's visit. It was reported that Smith had come back rich. He had indeed a good deal of money and was making quite a noise about it. He had followed his business while absent, and found it much more profitable than digging in the mines. But of this he said nothing. He merely said, "he'd been to California, and there was no farther necessity for *his* making shoes; he meant to drive a bigger business." His help-meet, who had long pined for "a large house and a hired girl," was now about to have these wishes realized. She therefore felt "as good as anybody!"

But we shall have more to do with her hereafter, therefore we will dismiss her for the present. Soon after her entrance Mrs. Lee took leave.

As she walked homewards she reflected upon the little incident connected with the sugar-plums, the entire absence of selfishness shown by both the children in the division of

what was to them quite a treasure. She conjectured, and with reason too, that such a disposition had not been formed or cultivated by any particular course of training pursued by their parents, but must be the natural result of perfect unanimity between those parents. This was the secret. George and Susan Elmer were not wise or learned persons. They had no theory of family government — no system of "suasion" upon which they acted. But they had no differences. They agreed in every thing. With this example of mutual confidence and respect before them, how could the children be other than they were, loving and obedient?

That evening, when these little ones knelt by their mother's knee to say their prayers, Mary, who repeated hers first, voluntarily added the name of Mrs. Lee to those for whom she daily prayed; and her brother followed her example. Thus ran the simple petition.

"O God! forgive all my sins, and make me a good child, and bless my dear father, and mother, and grandmother, and brothers, and Mrs. Lee, and everybody, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen!"

After the children had gone to bed, Mrs. Grant said to her daughter,

"Susan, is it right to let the children pray for their father now?"

"I don't know, mother," replied the sorrowful woman. "I have thought a good deal about it myself, but somehow I cannot bear to tell them they must no longer ask God to bless their father. It seems like breaking the last link between him and us, and something tells me it is better to let them do it. It cannot do *them* any harm, and surely it cannot hurt poor George, can it, mother?"

"Just so, it cannot, my child, and I don't believe it will be laid to your charge as a sin."

Thus answering, the old mother took off her spectacles and wiped the tears from her eyes, and the two worked on for some time in silence. At length Mrs. Grant said,

"Susan, what a difference there is between folks!"

"A very great difference, mother. Were you thinking of Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Smith? I was at that moment."

"Yes, they were the persons I had in my mind when I spoke. I noticed the contrast more, I suppose, because they happened to be here at the same time. What a perfect lady Mrs. Lee is! how kind and pleasing in her manners!"

"She is indeed. It seems to me I never before realized how much there is in kind words. I have felt better ever since."

"Yes, they were what the Bible calls 'words fitly spoken.' But that Mrs. Smith! Somehow I can't help thinking she only came to spy out the nakedness of the land! can you?"

"It did appear so certainly, but you know it isn't right to judge from appearances. She may mean very well, though she isn't at all like Mrs. Lee."

"Very true; she may mean well, and have an odd way with her."

It was evident to Mrs. Lee that the Elmers were very poor. The apartment in which she had found them, although it had an air of comfort which cleanliness and order always give to even the meanest abode, yet betokened extreme indigence, and she thought it strange that George Elmer should have left his family so destitute. She in-

quired farther concerning them, of Harriet, her maid, who was one of the knowing kind.

Harriet was able to give her the required information, for she had found out a good deal about them from the Ludlows, who had bought no small part of Mrs. Elmer's furniture.

"O yes, I meant to tell you about 'em," said she, "for I thought likely you'd do something to help 'em. They're dreadful poor I guess, though he left 'em quite comfortable when he went away. But she's been sick a good deal since, and they seem to have run out pretty much. She takes in sewing, and the old woman knitting; but I guess it's precious little they earn, for since she heard of his death, she's left the good house they lived in, and sold off the chief of her furniture very low indeed. Mrs. Ludlow bought a nice set of chairs, and a handsome bureau, besides several other things of her. She said she thought it was a deed of charity to take 'em; but for my part, I thought Mrs. Ludlow got a bargain."

Mrs. Lee no longer hesitated. She procured a quantity of knitting yarn, and the next morning set out with it for the house of Mrs. Elmer. After some little conversation with the women, she said, laying the package on the table,

"I have brought yarn for Mrs. Grant to knit into stockings for me. She can do them at her leisure, as I shall not need them until next fall."

Mrs. Grant thanked her, and Mrs. Lee turned the conversation to other subjects. She talked with Susan about the children, especially Mary, in whom she already felt an unusual interest.

"Your little girl is like my own, and you must spare her to me for a day now and then."

Susan acquiesced cheerfully in this proposal, and it was settled that Mary should go to Mrs. Lee's one day during the following week. Harriet was to come after her.

"O I shall be so glad!" exclaimed the light-hearted child; "but then who'll help mother take care of the baby?"

"I can do that," said Johnny, straightening up with an air of importance. This difficulty disposed of, another suggested itself to Mary's mind.

"Mother," she whispered, looking down at her patched and faded clothes, "What shall I do? my frock is real rusty."

"You have another, my dear;" and Susan colored slightly.

"I know it, but that's just as rusty as this you know."

"Never mind the frock," said Mrs. Lee, smiling. "It is Mary and not the frock that I care about."

Then calling Johnny to her, she gave him a gay wooden soldier, and rose to go. At the same time she drew from her pocket a five dollar bank note, and proffering it to Mrs. Grant, said,

"I will pay you now for the knitting."

"I thank you, but I can't change that," said the old woman; "and besides I don't know how much to charge until I see how many stockings the yarn will knit."

"Keep it all if you please," returned Mrs. Lee; "there is none too much; the yarn will knit several pairs, and knitting is slow work; we should always consider the time."

Mrs. Grant saw at once, and appreciated with heart-felt gratitude the good lady's delicate manner of bestowing a charity. She thanked her again, and not without tears

in her eyes. Mrs. Elmer joined her mother in expressions of gratitude, and Mrs. Lee, after a few more words with the children, and a kiss to the baby, took her departure.

"What a woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Grant; "she didn't even ask me what I charged. There's not many who do so, Susan."

"Not many indeed. She is one of a thousand."

"I feel as if the Lord had raised us up a friend who knows how to pity us, for she is a widow herself."

"Yes, she is a widow, and that's enough to bear without being poor like us, mother."

The old woman thought there was something like a murmur in these words, and it grieved her.

"Look there, Susan!" she said, pointing to the children, "the Lord leaves you all those; yet he saw fit to take from Mrs. Lee the only one she had."

Susan turned her tearful eyes towards the little ones, then clasping her hands, said in a low voice, "Thy will be done."

It was indeed a pleasant sight. The baby was in the cradle, crowing over the soldier which Johnny had put into his hands, while the other children sat, one on each side, watching his performances with great satisfaction.

"You like my *trainer* don't you, baby!" said the little boy. "Mrs. Lee's a nice lady, isn't she, baby? I mean to keep my trainer always, wouldn't you, Mary?"

"Yes, I would," answered his sister, "but then you'll have to take it away from baby, for he'll soon have the paint all off."

"Sure enough, I never thought of that. I'll get him something else." So he ran and brought a cord with several empty spools strung upon it, a plaything which be-

came a novelty by the occasional addition of another spool, and aided by Mary succeeded in extricating the trainer from his perilous situation, and in pacifying the baby, who was at first disposed to grumble at the exchange.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Lee had said that she should not need the stockings for some months to come, Mrs. Grant determined to go to work upon them immediately, as "there was no knowing what might happen." On opening the package of yarn, she found in it a note directed to Mrs. Elmer. It contained a few kind words and the sum of twenty dollars. At this additional proof of Mrs. Lee's goodness, Susan's tears flowed afresh, and her mother said,

"'He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; that woman is surely laying up treasures in heaven."

When little Mary went to pay the promised visit to Mrs. Lee, she wore a neat new calico frock, and she said to the lady, "My mother told me I must thank you for my new frock."

The child was very happy that day, looking at books and pictures, and talking with Mrs. Lee about them. Then running out into the pleasant garden among the many beautiful spring flowers, and expressing her childish wonder and delight to Peter Jackson, the colored man who was working there, asking him a hundred questions which Peter good-naturedly answered. Then back again into the house, to wonder and exclaim at the variety of interesting objects there. In Mrs. Lee's own room she saw a child's chair, which delighted her greatly.

"O what a pretty chair!" she exclaimed; "I had just such a one when we were in the other house, but I think mother has given it away; the house where we live now is

too little to hold many chairs. May I sit down in it, Mrs. Lee?"

This had been little Mary Lee's chair; no child had ever sat in it since her death. It was guarded as a sacred relic, and more closely associated with its owner than any other of her little possessions so carefully preserved by the bereaved mother.

"Yes, you may sit in it, my dear," said Mrs. Lee.

"It seems exactly like my own chair," pursued the child as she rocked backwards and forwards in it. "I always used to sit in mine when mother and father were reading. And too, I used to sit in it when I was learning my hymns after mother."

"Say me some of your hymns, darling."

Mary repeated the simple verses that her mother had taught her, and wondered why Mrs. Lee cried so all the while.

"It must be" thought she, "because she feels so sorry that my father is dead." So she thought she would say something to comfort Mrs. Lee, and pausing in the midst of her hymn, she laid her hand on the lady's arm, and said —

"O, don't cry so Mrs. Lee, *that's* a great deal better place than this, there's no trouble *there*, and nobody ever dies, and all good people shall see each other there again."

Mrs. Lee looked wonderingly in the face of her little comforter. The deep blue eyes, so like those that had once been turned lovingly up to her own as she talked of heaven and the angels, were fixed upon her. It seemed as though the spirit of her sainted child was looking through them into her very heart, and tenderly rebuking her long-cherished sorrow. A feeling of awe stole over her, and

pressing her lips to the forehead of the little girl, she arose and led her from the room.

Mary went home at evening, as happy as child could be. She carried a basket containing several nice books for herself and Johnny, some pretty stuff to make frocks for the baby, and a bottle of cordial for her grandmother. There was also a mysterious package for her mother, neatly tied up, which Mary was very curious about, but she was too well-bred to ask questions. This was a suitable mourning shawl for Mrs. Elmer. Mrs. Lee accompanied the little girl home, and frequently offered to relieve her. But Mary insisted upon carrying the basket all the way, declaring that it wasn't the least bit heavy. And as she trudged along she chattered incessantly.

"O won't they be glad when I come? How Johnny will jump when he sees his book! and won't the baby look pretty in his new frocks! his old ones are growing so small, mother hasn't got him any in ever so long. I wonder if the little rogue has missed me. It seems a great while since I went away this morning, I never was gone so long before."

Thus she rattled on; and Mrs. Lee, who had resolved upon asking Mrs. Elmer to let her take little Mary, to be trained and educated as her own daughter, abandoned the idea when she saw how the child loved her home and family. Nay, she almost reproached herself for having entertained it. But she had conceived a strong affection for the little creature, and determined to do all that she could for her, without having her constantly under her own eye.

As soon as they entered the house, Mary rushed up to the baby, whom his mother was undressing, and nearly smothered him with kisses.

"O baby, I've got something for you," she said, waving the basket triumphantly. "And, Johnny, you don't know what I've got for you. And, grandmother, something for you too. And for you, mother. And I've had such a nice time. If Johnny had only been there" —

"We will hear about it by-and-by," said her mother, as she rose and pressed Mrs. Lee's hand. Mary stopped abruptly, when she remembered who was in the room, and taking off her bonnet and cape, sat down quietly with the baby in her arms, somewhat impatient it is true, to display the contents of the basket and relate her adventures. In fact, she could not help whispering them over for the baby's benefit, beginning each description thus: —

"And what do you think, baby, — I saw — And what do you think, baby! Mrs. Lee said — And where do you think, baby! Harriet went" —

From this time the circumstances of the Elmers were much improved. Many comforts were added to their humble dwelling through the kindness of their new friend, who soon began to consider the subject of assisting them to hire a more comfortable house. She had determined to do so, and was intending to speak of it to Mrs. Elmer very shortly, when she was summoned to attend the dying-bed of her sister. She had not time to see the Elmers before leaving. She however penned a hasty note to Susan, in which, after stating the cause of her sudden departure, she expressed the wish that Mrs. Elmer would seek a better house, and to enable her to do so, she enclosed an amount sufficient to pay a quarter's rent, as well as what would be due on leaving her present abode, and something over. "I cannot tell," she wrote, "how long I may be absent, perhaps several months. If you should want any assistance

before I return, do not hesitate to write to me immediately" (here she gave the address). "I shall consider it a privilege to aid you. Tell my little Mary to come to my garden for flowers whenever she likes, Peter will always give them to her, and may the God of the widow and the fatherless bless and keep you all."

This note she gave to Harriet, telling her that it was important, and she wished it to be carried to Mrs. Elmer as soon as she should be at leisure. Harriet was very busy at the time, assisting in Mrs. Lee's preparations for leaving in the afternoon run. Setting the house in order. Scattering moth-preventives from garret to cellar. Folding, hanging, spreading this, that and the other for safe keeping, and what not. Besides which she had her own trunk to pack, for she was to go to her father's, ten miles distant, in the stage, which usually went out about an hour after the cars. There she would remain until Mrs. Lee's return. The door-key was to be entrusted to Peter Jackson, the worthy colored man already spoken of, who always slept in the house during Mrs. Lee's absences. Harriet took the note saying, as she put it carefully in her reticule —

"I will run down with it as soon as I see you off."

She really intended to do so. She would not for the world have told a lie, or wilfully failed in duty to her mistress, but — alas poor human nature!

CHAPTER III.

AS soon as Mrs. Lee had gone, Harriet prepared for her own departure. She dressed herself hastily, fastened the window-shutters, dragged her trunk to the porch, locked the door and ran down to Peter's with the key. After delivering Mrs. Lee's directions to Peter, she went to the stage-house to bespeak her passage. Being told that the stage would call for her in about an hour, she hurried back to carry the note to Mrs. Elmer, who lived in another direction.

As she was passing Deacon Ludlow's, which was nearly opposite Mrs. Lee's, Miss Eunice called to her from the window. The Ludlows had been watching the proceedings at Mrs. Lee's with great interest all the morning. They had seen that lady depart, evidently on a journey, and it was much earlier than she usually made her annual visit east. But Harriet would come in and tell them all about it soon. When, however, they saw that she too was preparing to go away, they felt a slight degree of uneasiness; and seeing her at length actually about to pass their house without stopping, they feared losing her altogether and not finding out anything, and therefore arrested her progress as above stated.

"Where are you going, Harriet?" exclaimed the mother and three daughters, all in a breath.

"O I've got to go up street on an errand, but I'll stop and say good-by when I come back."

"O stop now, stop now; can't you?"

"Well I suppose I may as well come in a minute now, the stage don't go in nearly an hour yet."

And so she went in, to the great relief of the Ludlows. Harriet, although as honest and faithful a girl as ever lived, had a great *talent* for gossiping, and not being encouraged to exercise it at Mrs. Lee's, was very glad to indulge in an occasional outpouring at Deacon Ludlow's, where it was fully appreciated and drawn out. In fact they made a good deal of her there, always invited her to attend the weekly prayer-meeting whenever it was held at their house, and noticed her in several ways in order to keep her good natured. Of course the simple-minded girl was flattered by such attentions, and often "ran in," after her work was done up, to chat an hour or so with them. She had no suspicion of the estimation in which they really held, or professed to hold, her among their acquaintances, to whom they frequently remarked, —

"What a pert, forward thing that Harriet is! I wouldn't keep such a creature round *me*, but I guess Mrs. Lee's not very particular who she has, if she only gets her work done."

Had Harriet known of this, she never would have gone in there again. Not so much on her own account as Mrs. Lee's, with whom she had lived nearly seven years without a wish to change her place, and whom she regarded as approaching nearer to perfection than any other living person.

On this occasion the Ludlows had a thousand questions to ask; and Harriet, in her zeal to tell all the whys and the wherefores, the hows and the whens of Mrs. Lee's movements, as well as her own, allowed her minute to be a very long one. After running on for half an hour with great

velocity, she jumped up suddenly, declaring she *must* go, for she'd got to take a note to Mrs. Elmer. But then she was assailed with another volley of questions, on the subject of Mrs. Lee's intercourse with the Elmers, and she could not resist the temptation to sit down a moment longer and tell about Mrs. Lee's kindness to that family, at least as much as she knew about it, for she had often been sent there with vegetables and other things. "And sometimes there was such a load that Peter Jackson had to go with it."

"O, she does a great deal for them, and there's many a poor family can say the same. She's always doing good, I never saw the beat of it; why, some folks would get rich on what she gives away" —

"I wonder if she don't expect to ride to heaven on her good works," said Mrs. Ludlow.

"Well, I guess that's a pretty sure-footed horse any way," responded Harriet with some warmth.

"O Harriet, Harriet!" said Mrs. Ludlow solemnly, "I'm sorry to hear you speak so, it shows what influence you've been under. Don't you know the Bible says our own righteousness is but filthy rags? Nothing but a living faith can save us."

"Yes, I know it, a *living* faith, and that's just Mrs. Lee's kind of faith, for 'faith without works is *dead*,' the same Bible says, you know."

"I'm glad you read your Bible," said Mrs. Ludlow with a slight sneer, for she felt a little chagrined that the girl was able to give her blow for blow with her own weapons. Harriet noticed the sneer and answered, —

"Well, I won't take credit that isn't my due. I own I don't read my Bible as much as I ought to, though I've no

excuse, for I've got a beautiful one that Mrs. Lee gave me. But I *hear* it read every night and morning, so I know something about what's in it."

Perhaps she would have made a few more quotations, had she not at that moment heard the stage horn.

"O dear me! what shall I do! there's the stage and I haven't carried the note to Mrs. Elmer!"

"Never mind," said Miss Eunice, "Sam can run down with it, or one of us can take it to Mrs. Elmer!"

Poor Harriet had no resource but to accept Miss Ludlow's offer. So she gave her the note saying that it was very important, and she would like her to have it sent as soon as possible. She then hastened out, and saw the stage still at a little distance off, taking in some passengers. At the same moment she observed Sam Ludlow standing by Mrs. Lee's gate watching the approach of the stage.

"I'll give it to Sam myself," said she, turning back to the window in time to see the four Ludlows' heads close together over the note, which Miss Eunice was holding up to the light. Just in the midst of their comments upon it, they were startled by the voice of Harriet shouting, —

"Give it to me! there's Sam by our house."

Eunice could do no less than surrender the note, though she would gladly have kept it a little longer to satisfy herself in regard to its contents. Harriet was somewhat vexed at the curiosity of the Ludlows, and felt glad to get the note back again, she thought it was much better to give it to Sam herself, and see him start with it, then she should feel as though it would reach its destination safely. Sam Ludlow was a lubberly boy of fourteen. He was often hanging about Mrs. Lee's gate, and had several times gone on errands for Harriet, for which she always paid him a

sixpence in advance. Sam was very fond of a sixpence, and was much more ready to do errands for Harriet than for his mother or sisters, as they would not pay him.

"Here, Sam," said she, "I want you to take this note to Mrs. Elmer right away, I'm going in the stage and haven't time."

"Who was your waiter last year?" was Sam's reply.

Harriet knew that this was the way in which the interesting youth usually answered his sisters when they requested him to do anything, and she remembered that she had always paid him for waiting upon her. But she had now no change in her purse, her money was in bills, she could only promise a reward, she however persevered.

"Do take it for me, Sam, that's a good fellow, and when I come back I'll give you a shilling."

"Give it to me now."

"I can't, I haven't got the change, my money is all in bills. Will you take it? see, the stage is close by, I'll surely pay you the shilling when I come back, and that will be before long I expect."

"Swear you'll do it."

"No, Sam, I won't swear, that's wicked; but I solemnly promise."

"Well, kiss my jack-knife then, it's all the same in Dutch." And he took out the weapon so dear to every boy's heart, and held it up before her. They were lifting her trunk to the stage top.

"Will you carry the note if I'll kiss that?"

"As sure as gunflints."

"And right away, without going home first?"

"Right off, as quick as a streak 'o lightning."

"Are you coming?" shouted the driver.

Harriet kissed the jack-knife, gave Sam the note, and jumped into the stage, calling after Sam to be very careful, and not loiter a moment on the way. As she stretched her neck out of the stage window, she had the satisfaction of seeing the young gentleman start on his expedition; not quite so quick as lightning, but at a very brisk pace.

His sisters called to him from the window, but he hurried on without noticing them. Not so much that he wished to do his errand faithfully, as because "he didn't care for them."

"She's mighty anxious about this note, seems to me," said Sam, mentally, as he went on his way.

"Wonder what it's about! feels as though there was something in it — shouldn't wonder if 'twas money — pay for sewing I 'spose."

The note had been hastily written, and the envelope fastened lightly with a wafer. Sam thought he'd like to just see what was inside. Harriet was only a hired girl, what did he care for her! Some other vague thoughts floated through his mind. He determined to open it; he could easily stick it together again if he wanted to. So he turned to see whether the stage was out of sight. It was no longer visible.

A few paces on he turned aside into a narrow lane, went behind an old shed, no mortal eye was upon him, he felt quite safe; and, taking out his jack-knife, he slipped the blade under the wafer, which yielded without difficulty, and Sam found his conjectures correct. There was money, more money than he had ever seen together before. He blundered through the note as well as he could, and found that the money was a gift, not from Harriet,

but from Mrs. Lee. He thought of several things that he wanted very much, especially a fighting-cock, owned by a man who kept a ten-pin alley, and numerous other articles quite as useful and desirable. The temptation was strong. He saw that the amount was not mentioned in the note. There were several bills; he could take one, it never would be found out. So he stuffed a "five" into his pocket, wet the wafer a little and fastened it down again, and then contemplated his work with satisfaction.

It was well done. Nobody would ever have suspected that the note had been opened. He went on a few steps, and then paused to contemplate it again; and as he did so he reflected, "Why not take the whole while it was in his power? But Harriet and Mrs. Lee would come back, and then he would be found out. What then?" "Never mind," said the tempter in his ear. "The old man'll have to fork over, that's all, and you'll have the good of the money."

"And the old woman," thought Sam, "how she'll jaw and jaw, if I'm ever found out."

"Never mind that neither," pursued the tempter, "they can't blame you, they expect you to *cut up* now, you aint converted yet."

"So here goes," said Sam, and he tore open the envelope, took out the rest of the money, chewed the note until it became a soft wad, then threw it at the old shed, where for aught I know to the contrary, it is sticking to this day. He then took his way to the residence of the game-cock's owner, where he astonished divers *young gentlemen* by his display of the *ready*, although he was careful not to exhibit the whole amount in his possession. It was a strange thing to see Sam Ludlow with more than a shilling in his

hands, and of course the "five" which he drew from his pocket created some surprise.

"Why, Sam, where did you get so much?" "Found the way to the old man's locker?" "Old boy loosened his purse strings at last, eh?" were some of the questions showered upon the young thief. But he contrived to evade them. "Pity if he couldn't have a little money as well as other folks. He didn't see what there was to make such a thundering fuss about."

When Sam left the ten-pin alley, his five was nearly exhausted. He had entered to his heart's content into the amusements of the establishment. A thing which he had not been able to do before for want of funds. He had also regaled himself with various good things; and as he walked homewards with his long-desired game-cock under his arm, he felt a high degree of satisfaction; for, notwithstanding he had lost all that he staked in the games, he still had a large sum left, upon which he meant to revel for a long time to come.

On his arrival at home, his sisters questioned him concerning the note. But he gave them no satisfaction.

"Didn't you notice what was in it when she opened it."

"No; I didn't go in the house at all."

"Well, I should like to know whether there was money in that note. Why didn't you wait a minute and see, you stupid fellow!"

"What do you s'pose I cared about knowing what was in the plaguey note? What business was it of mine?"

The game-cock did not attract much attention at the deacon's Sam was always bringing home something of the animal kind to annoy the family, and generally bargained it away for something else in a few days.

Deacon Ludlow, although himself a worthy, religious man, unfortunately took very little pains with the early training of his children. He never questioned Sam in regard to where he spent his evenings. In fact, he seldom reproved him for anything. Mrs. Ludlow, it is true, scolded and fretted at the boy frequently, but he regarded her words no more than the idle wind. Sam Ludlow had started in the road to destruction, and there was no voice to call him back.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Elmers wondered what had become of Mrs. Lee. Many days passed without one of her welcome visits. The chatty, good-natured Harriet, too, they missed her almost daily calls. And it was but natural that they should miss the comforts she was wont to bring. After some time it was settled that they must have gone away. At length they questioned Peter Jackson as he was passing one day, and from him they learned the facts.

About a fortnight after Mrs. Lee's departure, Mrs. Elmer's mother was suddenly reduced to a state of entire helplessness by another paralytic stroke. She was confined wholly to her bed. Her mind also was greatly affected, and she showed an irritability and fretfulness quite foreign to her nature. Susan's labors were increased tenfold by this calamity. Her mother required more care

than an infant, and could not bear to have Susan out of her sight for a moment. Her speech was much impaired, but her sight and hearing were, if anything, quickened. She would have the window-curtains down, for the broad daylight hurt her eyes. The children's noise disturbed her very much, and Susan was obliged to send the two older ones out of doors to play, many times when she would gladly have kept them in. Her sewing too, had to be almost wholly abandoned. She had but little time for it during the day, and then the room was so dark that she could scarcely see at all. When the evening came, and the little ones were all gone to their rest, the old mother, too, at last asleep, and Susan sat down with her work in hand, she was usually so worn and weary that her fingers almost refused to move.

Things went on in this way for a month, and Susan's resources were nearly gone. She had for some time past reduced her own and her children's food to the smallest possible quantity, and that of the coarsest kind. A little of a better quality she still managed to procure for her mother, and the old woman complained that this was not as good as she wished. Susan knew that her poor mother was not herself any longer, and she never manifested the least impatience with her murmuring. But she missed her encouraging words, the "trust in the Lord, my child. He will not forsake you," with which she used to cheer her in times of despondency. And she thought if her mother would only speak so now, she could bear up better under her trials.

And George, too, how she missed *him* now! more than ever — more every day. She could not help it. The future looked very dark. Pay-day was drawing on, and

where was her rent to come from! Pay-day came, and Susan was not ready. The landlord, a hard-fisted, grasping man, called for his dues. Mrs. Elmer told him it was utterly impossible for her to pay then, she had not a dollar, but if he would give her a few days' time, she hoped to be able to satisfy him. He appeared to doubt her word, and pointing to the mantel-clock (George's last gift before he went from home), he intimated a wish to take possession of it.

"I'll take that," he said, "seeing you don't seem to have anything else that's worth much; though it's a poor concern, still, I don't know but I'll take it and let you off, considering."

Susan looked at him with astonishment. She was not accustomed to such meanness. She knew that the clock had cost more than double the amount of her debt, and she knew that the man must be aware of its value. She hesitated a while. It went to her heart to part with it.

"Well, what do you say? shall I take it?"

"It is a valuable clock, sir, it cost more than twice as much as I owe you, and has not been in use a year yet."

The man advanced close to her, and impertinently examined her brooch, which she always wore.

"That'll do," said he, after satisfying himself that it was real gold. "I'll take that if you aint a mind to let the clock go. I'll take it and say *square;* guess it's worth five dollars. You owe me twelve; but considering your circumstances, I'll be satisfied with that."

Long before the conclusion of this speech, Susan had covered her brooch with her hand, as if his very look were profanation; and when he finished, she turned towards the clock, and said hurriedly, —

"Take that."

He proceeded to take it down, and after it was safely in his possession, he told Mrs. Elmer that she must vacate the house before night, as he had rented it to some one who would be ready pay. Susan's indignation was roused at this shameful injustice, and she said, —

"Surely, you do not mean to turn me out of the house now, with my helpless mother and little ones. That clock, too, is fully worth another quarter's rent, and a good deal more. You will allow me to remain a few weeks, and meantime I will be looking for another house."

"This clock worth another quarter's rent, hey!" and he laughed heartily at the idea. "Why, woman, you know nothing about the value of things, if you did you'd think I've let you off pretty easy. As for the house, didn't I tell you I'd let it already to a family that's to take possession to-morrow. I've done the best I can by you. Everybody must look to their own interest, you know, and if I have a chance to let a tenement to better advantage than I can to you, why of course it's my duty to do it. I owe it to my own family; scripture, you know, says everybody must provide for their own."

Susan said no more, she was not accustomed to disputing, and she allowed the face-grinder to depart without farther parley. When he reached the door, he turned back and remarked that "he should expect to find the premises cleared early in the morning of the following day." She merely bowed in reply, and he went away, to her great relief.

But where should she go? No home and no means of procuring one. It was still early in the day, not more than ten o'clock. The old woman appeared confused and

puzzled at the scene which had just taken place, and asked some questions, although she did not comprehend anything of it. Susan brought her a cup of tea and a bit of toast, sat by her, and answered her questions in a manner that satisfied her, and before long she fell into a sound sleep. Susan immediately gave the baby into Mary's charge, told Johnny to sit quietly beside his grandmother's bed until her return, put on her bonnet and shawl, and slipped quietly into the street.

Where should she go? where, where? If Mrs. Lee were only at home! The thought of writing to her for aid to enable her to remain in her present abode, crossed her mind. But it was too late. She must quit to-day. She looked up the street and then down, undecided which way to go.

At length her eye fell upon an old, brown, barnish looking house, standing alone on a slight eminence, a little out of the town. She knew it was the residence of Mrs. Maddock, the woman with whom she learned the business of dressmaking. Now a widow like herself, and poor, too, but not in want, for she owned the house which she occupied, and by her own labors, she still pursued her former occupation, supported herself and two children, something older than Susan's two eldest. She had also four children still older, who were all earning their own living at different trades. Two sons had gone from home, and two daughters, tailoresses, boarded with their mother and took in work from the shops.

Thither Susan determined to bend her steps. She had not seen much of Mrs. Maddock since her marriage, but she remembered her as a very kind-hearted woman.

"Perhaps she can help me," thought the desolate

woman as she pursued her way. "I recollect how kind she used to be to us apprentice girls. How in pleasant weather she always sent us out on the grass plot twice a day to have a romp, and stretch our limbs. She said our health required it. And what pleasant cooling drinks she used to make for us in hot days."

Many other little circumstances Susan recalled as she went along, all of them in Mrs. M.'s favor, and she could not help feeling that she would do something for her now. Nor was she mistaken — Mrs. Maddock had heard of George Elmer's death, but not of the circumstances of his family. She listened to Susan's sad story with tears, and when it was ended, freely offered her a shelter in her own house.

"There is one good-sized room at liberty, on the ground floor too, and if you can get along with that, come. We're poor but we have health, and no helpless ones amongst us."

"But perhaps I never shall be able to pay you."

"Don't borrow any trouble about that, dear. If you ever should be able to pay me, as I hope you will for your own sake, why well and good. And if you shouldn't 'twont kill me. I shan't be any poorer for it a hundred years hence."

"No, indeed you will not," said Susan as grateful tears fell from her eyes. "'He that giveth to the poor lendeth unto the Lord;' and He will surely reward you whether I ever can or not."

She then arose, saying that she would go and hire a cart to remove her furniture.

"Wait a moment," said Mrs. M., "and I will run over and see if Neighbor Grey's team is at liberty to-day, if it should be it will save you the expense of a cart, for they have offered me the use of it whenever I wish."

So she hastened to Neighbor Grey's, and soon returned with the pleasing intelligence, that she could have the team all the afternoon, and David Grey to drive. It was arranged that immediately after dinner, she would come down with David and the team. She would have a bed laid in the wagon, and Mrs. Grant should be removed before anything else, lest she might be worried by the noise and confusion.

When Susan returned home, she found things just as she had left them, and her mother still sleeping. She prepared their scanty dinner, and soon after they had eaten it, the old woman awaked. While Susan was giving her a rather more substantial meal than the rest of them had enjoyed, she told her of the approaching change in their circumstances, and at length succeeded in making her understand that they were going to a new home, much more comfortable than the present one, where they would have no stairs to ascend, and where a very nice woman was living.

She appeared rather pleased with the idea of a change, and when the kind-looking Mrs. Maddock, and the good-natured David Grey soon after came in, she was quite willing to have them and Susan lift her gently from the bed and carry her out to the wagon. They laid her in an easy position on the soft bed and pillows which Mrs. Maddock had arranged, and Susan seated herself beside her on the bed, holding a parasol to shade her face. Mrs. Maddock went on the sidewalk carrying the baby, while Mary and Johnny trotted behind her as merry as birds, shouting and talking to the baby, who crowed and laughed back to them. They reached the house before the rest of the party, who advanced very slowly and carefully. Susan

talked cheerfully to her mother, and the old woman seemed to enjoy the ride very much.

When they arrived at Mrs. Maddock's, Mrs. Grant was laid upon Mrs. M.'s bed until her own could be prepared. She appeared rather uneasy at being in a strange house, and would not suffer Susan to leave her at all. Therefore Mrs. Maddock kindly offered to go back with the wagon and superintend the loading up of the furniture. There was not much, and it was soon transported. The small piece of carpet was laid down, the bed was set up, and the old woman was deposited on it, to change no more until she should lie down in the last resting-place of us all.

As Susan went about, arranging her few articles in the quiet room, she felt a degree of satisfaction that she had not known for months. For she was sure that, happen what might, there was now no danger of her poor mother and little ones being turned into the street. She was more cheerful than she had been in a long, long time. There was a certain hymn which she used to be fond of singing, and George of hearing, and this evening as she rocked her baby to sleep, she sang it for the first time since she had heard of her husband's death. It had a chorus which ran thus :—

"Look up, my soul! be like the lark
That singing soars afar —
There's ne'er a cloud however dark
But veils a shining star."

When she had laid her baby down and ceased singing, her mother, who had been lying very quietly for sometime, said, "Sing it again, child."

Surprised and pleased Susan complied, and when she had finished, the old woman said,

"Once more, my child, it sounds so good."

So she sang it a third time, with a tremulous voice and shedding thankful tears all the while. And when it was ended, the old mother took up the last words, "shining star," and murmured them over several times, each time fainter, until they died away entirely, and she fell asleep.

The children, who were in their little bed, had been lying awake, listening to their mother, and presently she heard Mary say in a low voice,

"Johnny, are you awake?"

"Yes, are you?"

"Yes, did you hear mother sing?"

"I guess I did, didn't it sound pleasant, Mary?"

"O, it did, it made me think of the angels with shining wings that live above the clouds."

"So it did me, how funny that we should think of the same thing!"

"So it was, Johnny, it made me think of father too, did it you?"

"Yes, I thought about father while I was thinking of the angels."

"So did I. He used to like to hear mother sing that, you know."

"Did he? I forget."

"Why yes, Johnny, don't you remember how he used to say, 'Come, Susey, sing the "shining star"?"

"O yes, I do remember about it now."

"I wonder if he heard her sing it now!" said the little girl musingly. And then they went to sleep with their arms round each other's necks.

As Susan sat by her little taper, she thought over these childish words. She thought too of her mother's pleasure while she was singing, and of her peaceful falling asleep afterwards. Then she wondered that she had so long lost sight of the "shining star," and was glad she had found it again. It had made them all so happy. And she knelt down and prayed that her afflictions might soften her heart, and draw her nearer to God. That she might no longer look *at* the cloud, but *through* it, and ever keep her eye upon the "shining star" beyond. From this time she went about her daily round of toilsome duties, resigned, and even cheerful, and every night she sang the "Shining Star."

CHAPTER V.

MRS. ELMER was much more comfortable at Mrs. Maddock's than she had been before since Mrs. Lee went away. Her quarters were narrow, it is true, but there was a shady, pleasant door-yard, where Mrs. Maddock permitted the children to play whenever they chose. There they passed several hours when the weather was fine. And sometimes they had the baby with them in a little wagon belonging to Jane and Sarah, Mrs. Maddock's little girls. Meanwhile their mother was busy within, now at the old woman's bedside, now at her household work, and now patching and mending for herself and children.

Her evenings Susan devoted to sewing for Mrs. Maddock. By this means she hoped to pay her rent, and she was therefore surprised when after finishing the first piece, that good woman proffered her full pay.

"O no, Mrs. Maddock," said Susan, "I wish to pay the rent of my room in this way."

"Fie! fie! dear," returned Mrs. M., throwing the money into her lap, "don't speak of that again, if you do I shall be offended. Don't you know you must have something coming in to live on? You may just as well help me about my sewing, as to take it in *on your own hook*. I have more calls than I can possibly attend to. And besides, my eyes are not as strong as they once were. I can't sew of evenings any more excepting on the plainest parts, and your help will be a great accommodation to me. It will enable me to serve all my customers. So if you will just take hold and lend me a hand whenever you feel like it, and allow me to pay you what it's worth, I assure you it will not only be some assistance to you, but 'twill actually put money in my pocket too."

"Thank you! thank you! Mrs. Maddock. Then I will do the nicest parts and you the plainest, for my eyes are perfectly strong and good yet."

"Agreed, that's a nice arrangement. But you mustn't try your eyes too much and spoil them while you're a young woman. You shall have one of my lard lamps in here. I have two, and the girls and I never use but one at a time. They give a bright light and then they're very economical. You can burn any kind of grease in them, and that saves the expense of oil."

Susan thanked her again, and said she hoped there would come a time when she should be able to repay some

of this kindness, and the conversation ended with Mrs. Maddock's commanding her never again to speak of obligation.

This worthy woman's kindness did not stop here. Scarcely a day passed without some token of her interest in the Elmers. A pie or a cake for the children. And often a bit of fish, an egg, or some other little delicacy for the old woman. And every morning a pitcher of milk.

"You will at least take pay for the milk," said Susan, almost imploringly.

"Bless your soul and body, dear woman," Mrs. Maddock replied, "do you think I shall be any the poorer in a hundred years for giving you a little milk? I never sell milk to anybody that's worse off than I am. My cow's a first-rate animal. I make all my own butter and have several pots to spare every fall. And when a rich family wants to buy milk of me, why I take the pay of course. But as for selling milk to poor folks, I can't do *that*. My mother before me never did it, and I never will."

"Your mother must have been very good."

"Good! I never saw the like of her. I didn't know how good she was when I was a young, giddy girl. It wasn't so much by what she *said* as by what she *did*, that she showed her goodness. But after she was dead and gone I began to realize it. And when I was married and went away, and saw more of the world, then it struck me how much better my mother was than most of people. And when my family began to grow up round me, and I had my own trials and troubles, I remembered how many my mother had, and how patiently she bore them. O how sorry I felt that I hadn't been more dutiful and loving to her. So I tried to do as she used to, for I remembered her ac-

tions better than her words. And I've tried to keep them always before me. But if I should live a hundred and fifty years I never should come to be what my mother was."

Susan looked at the poor wreck upon the bed, and thanked God in her heart that she too had been reared by a good mother, and was now privileged to sustain and care for her in that state of helplessness.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Maddock's unvarying kindness, there were some circumstances which rendered Susan's situation rather unpleasant to one of her temperament. The feeling of dependence which constantly weighed upon her spirit, was increased by a suspicion that the two older daughters of Mrs. Maddock were not satisfied with her being there. They were good-tempered girls, and there was never anything rude or unkind in their deportment towards herself. But occasionally a hasty expression to her children escaped them. And once, as she was passing through the entry, she heard one of them say to the other,

"I think we have children enough of our own without keeping other people's. I should think she might put Mary out." Susan did not blame the girls. She thought it natural that they should feel so. But it made her very unhappy. She had not thought of putting Mary out before, and it wrung her heart. But she felt the necessity of doing something. If Mrs. Lee were only home. She knew that she might count upon help from her. She was almost sure that she would have been glad to take Mary, and *that*, she could have borne, for Mary loved Mrs. Lee, and would no doubt have been happy with her. But she was gone, and there was no one who knew when she would be back.

While she was in this state of perplexity, an opportunity offered for getting Mary a place, and she embraced it.

Not without many secret tears, still in the hope that the separation would not be long. The child herself was at first unwilling to go. She could not bear to leave her mother and Johnny, and above all the baby. And then too, Mrs. Smith, with whom she was going to live, was not a bit like Mrs. Lee. She did not look as pleasant. If it was Mrs. Lee she would be willing to go and live always with her.

But her mother talked long and seriously to her.

"You are a little girl, Mary," she said, "but you are old enough to see that I have to work very hard to get clothes and food for you all. Mrs. Smith offers to feed and clothe you, which is very kind. And in return you are to help take care of her baby, just as you do of your own little brother. Don't you see that will be helping me very much?"

When the little girl understood that it would be a relief to her mother, she became reconciled to the idea of going, and the next morning, after a great many kisses all round, and numerous hugs administered to the baby, she set out for Mrs. Smith's, with a basket on her arm containing her small wardrobe, and Sarah Maddock to show her the way.

"I don't half like the looks of that Mrs. Smith where Mary's gone," said Mrs. Maddock to her daughters.

"Nor I," said Martha.

"Nor I neither," said Anne. "I should be very sorry if the little thing wasn't well treated, for she's a good child."

Both the girls felt some compunction for having wished her away, and they made amends afterwards by constant kindness to Johnny and the baby.

The Mrs. Smith with whom Mary had gone to live was

the one before mentioned, wife of the man who had made his fortune in California, no longer "Jonathan Smith the shoemaker," but "J. Pixley Smith, the leather merchant." The exact amount of Mr. Smith's acquisitions in California was not known; but to judge from the change in his outward circumstances since his return, it must have been considerable. He was doing business on a pretty large scale; and Mrs. Smith, from a small, unpainted house, where she "did her own work," was elevated to a tall, red brick one, with bright green window blinds, and there, reigned over a *hired girl* and also a baby nurse. An extract from a letter which she wrote about this time to a sister in Vermont, will give some idea both of the woman and her mansion: —

"It's bilt of brick painted red, three story high, and very tall chimberly tops, and a suller kitchen in the basement underneath. The upper story we haint furnished more than to put shades to the windows to make a show on the outside, but the first and second stories is complete. I've got two parlors with folding doors between 'em; the front parlor is furnished with mahogony chairs and a sofa cushined with hair cloth, and a looking glass bigg enough to see the whole of yourself in, and two ottermans, and a splendid centre-table with a tremenjous bigg astorial lamp in the middle of it. The mantletry shelf is supported by marble pillows, and atop of it stands three Jo Randals, the middle one nearly a yard high, with rising of a hundred diamond dependants hanging from it. Over the sofa hangs Mr. Smith's portrait as natural as life, and the windows has gold cornishes as much as a foot wide, and musling curtings of the most costliest description. And the carpets I couldn't describe if I should try forever, they being alike

in both parlers, and all covered with magnificent flower pots bright enough to dazzle common folkses eyes. In the back parler stands Henrietta's piano; we calculate to have her learn music; then there's two tater tates, you know what they are I spose, and chairs and mantletry-shelf like them in the front parler, on which stands a number of pappy Mash ornaments, that's very fashionable now. You never saw any like em, they being intirely new fashined, and named after the inventor, old Mr. Mash. I shouldn't wonder if it was the one we used to know, he was always inventing something you know, and a number more things of various discriptions. At the lower end I calculate to have a family picture to hang; it's nearly done now, and Mr. Boggles is a painting it; you can imagine how superior it is when I tell you that we shall have to pay twenty-five dollars for it. It represents the four oldest children a standing up in a row; Ferdinand stands first with a book in his hand, Henrietta next with a bokay, Josephine next a holding her doll, and Columbus last a drumming on his little drum. On one side sits me a holding the babe, J. Pixley Junior in my arms. In the folding doors stands one of these Elizabeth Ann chairs, that's considered so undispensable in every genteel parler at the present time, with a high-pinted back and cushined with red velvet, and very uneasy if a body ever wanted to set down in em, but they don't. We calculate to have the house heated by a furniss in the basement next fall, with legislators in the floor to let the heat go up stairs you know. Stoves ain't considered genteel any longer only in kitchings. I tell you Ime as good as anybody now. I've had a number of calls from ladies that never come near me before; they seem to jest found out we live in town. Californy gold dust aint like

other dust; it seems to open some folkses eyes all of a sudding, instid of blinding em. I keep a bigg girl that does the heft of my work, and have to pay her a dollar a week; and besides her I've got a small one to take care of J. Pixley, and I get a good deal out of her and it's all clear gain, for all I pay her is her clothing and vittals, and the clothing aint much, as I shall make her wear the girls' old things; the food is something, for such children eat awfully, but I watch her pretty close; she's only seven year old but I never saw a child of that age so handy with a babe. A good deal of the furniture I've discribed, husband bought to a vandue in New York, very cheap indeed, but don't you never breathe a sillyble about it to no living creature, but come as soon as convenient and see how we look in our new residence."

When little Mary arrived at Mrs. Smith's, Sarah took her to the basement door and then left her. She knocked and was told to come in. There was no one in the kitchen excepting the hired girl, who was washing up the breakfast things. She was an odd looking girl, almost as dark as a squaw, with a flat nose and a long chin. She was cross-eyed too, and her stiff black hair was cropped close to her head. Mary was almost frightened when she first looked at her. But when she spoke in a pleasant voice and asked if "this was the little girl that was to live there," her fears subsided, and she answered in the affirmative.

"Well then, take off your things and I'll put them up stairs; you'll sleep with me."

Mary surrendered her bonnet and cape, as well as her basket to the queer-looking girl, who patted her head and said, "How nice your hair curls! is it natural?"

"Natural?" said the little girl inquiringly.

"I mean do you roll it up in papers, or does it curl itself?"

"O, it curls itself. I didn't know what you meant at first."

"Well, that's beautiful. Now I suppose you must go up stairs to Mrs. Smith's room. No need of my going with you; right up this stairs and then along the hall, and into the room where you hear a dreadful hullabaloo."

These directions enabled Mary to find the room without difficulty. She tapped at the door, but was not heard. So she opened it and went in. Such was the commotion inside that her entrance was unnoticed. The two girls were disputing furiously about Josephine's sun-bonnet, which she declared Henrietta had hidden. Columbus, a boy about three years old, was stamping about in an old pair of his father's boots, and Mrs. Smith, baby in arms, was standing at the window, knocking and screaming at Ferdinand, the eldest hope, who was loitering in the street, instead of going to school.

"You *do* know where it is, and you know you do," said Josephine.

"I don't neither, and you know I don't."

"You lie, and you know you lie."

"I don't lie, you lie yourself. Say ma! shan't she give me up my sun-bonnet? I want to go to school."

"I don't care whether she does or not," shouted Mrs. Smith turning quickly round. "I'm half crazy with this everlasting racket; go to school, sun-bonnet or no sun-bonnet." And she gave them each a hearty box on the ear and pushed them out of the door, while they retaliated by calling her a "mean old thing," "old cross-patch," &c.

As Mrs. Smith opened the door to eject the girls, she perceived little Mary, who stood trembling behind it.

"O you've come, have you? well, I'll attend to you soon." She then seized Columbus and shook him violently with the hand she had at liberty.

"What do you mean, you little scamp, clattering round in them boots! get out of 'em quicker;" and she lifted him up by the arm so that the boots fell off. The boy bawled lustily. At this moment Mr. Smith entered the room, evidently much excited.

"At it again hey?" said he. "You're always abusing that boy. Lummy, my son, come with pa," taking hold of his arm.

Mrs. Smith did not relax her gripe on the other arm. The boy was a constant bone of contention between his parents.

"I wish," she said, "you wouldn't always interfere when I'm a trying to correct him, Mr. Smith."

"And I wish you'd be good enough to let go of his arm, Mrs. Smith."

As the mother labored under a disadvantage on account of one arm being occupied with J. Pixley, Junior, she was in the end compelled to yield, and the affectionate father led his son off in triumph to the "leather store."

Poor little Mary, to whom such scenes were new, was nearly frightened out of her wits at it, and felt quite relieved to find herself alone with Mrs. Smith and the baby. Mrs. Smith was a tall, poking woman, with a sallow complexion, and a long, sharp nose. She turned to Mary as soon as the coast was cleared, and ordered her to go to the kitchen and tell Jerusha to send her a basin of water, right from the pump to wash the *babe*. Mary obeyed, and after

sending her to fetch half a dozen more things, Mrs. Smith was ready to begin the ablution of J. Pixley.

He was a very fat baby, with cheeks hanging down on his shoulders, and a pointed head, crowned on the summit with a tuft of stiff, black hair about an inch long, which stuck up straight in spite of all his mother's efforts with comb and brush, to make it lie down. Little Mary's first movement was to run up and stand by Mrs. Smith, as she always did by her mother when she washed their baby.

"What makes him cry so?" she asked. "Our baby never does when he's washed."

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if your ma takes the chill off the water. Some folks don't know any better, but it's no way. I always wash my children in the coldest water I can get, and in the summer I put a chunk of ice in it."

Mary no longer wondered that J. Pixley cried, nor that his skin was so red. She noticed when his mother put on his clothes, that she pinned his waist bands as tight as she could possibly draw them, and she concluded that this was done to push up the flesh and make his cheeks fat.

"How funny his hair looks," remarked the child in the simplicity of her heart. "It doesn't curl round like our baby's, his is real pretty; it goes *so;*" and she described several half circles with her finger on J. Pixley's head. Mrs. Smith never forgave her this speech. She glanced spitefully at the little girl's head, covered with those short golden rings which are so beautiful in childhood, and which art cannot imitate, thinking as she did so, of the stiff, mud-colored locks of her own children, and after a moment she said,

"So you think curly hair's mighty pretty? Well I don't agree with you. I'm glad he hasn't got curly hair, nor

any of the other children. It looks so niggery. If your ma expects me to fuss with yours as she does, and keep it quirled up in that ridiculous way, she's mistaken."

"My mother doesn't fuss with it. She only combs it out in the morning when I get up," said Mary, in some alarm, fearing that she had done something wrong.

"You talk too much child," said Mrs. Smith sharply.

When she had finished J. Pixley's toilet, she laid him in the cradle still screaming, and told her to rock him to sleep.

"And if he won't go to sleep so — take him up and walk with him till he does; do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Mary.

"And then sit down on that stool by the cradle and sew on this till he wakes up. You can sew some, can't you? you're old enough anyhow."

Mary answered that she could sew a little on coarse things, and she took from Mrs. Smith's hand a towel begun to be hemmed.

"And as soon as he wakes, let me know; do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," said the child, and then Mrs. Smith went into the kitchen.

Mary rocked the cradle, singing the while a childish tune. There was something in her voice and manner soothing to the poor baby after his mother's rough handling, and he soon ceased crying and fell asleep without obliging Mary to take him up. And then the little nurse began her sewing. She felt very sorrowful, as she sat on the little stool in that strange, disorderly room, and thought of the angry words she had heard, and the angry faces she had seen there, and then of her own home where all was so

different. It seemed as though she had been a long, long time away, and she could not prevent a few tears rolling down her cheeks. But she wiped them hastily off with the rough towel she was hemming, and said to herself, "I mustn't do so. I must try to be good and contented, and help my mother as much I can."

Poor little one! She had entered upon her first real trials. But we must reserve the account of them for another chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

AT this moment the little girl was startled by a strange noise under Mrs. Smith's bed, and presently a large Newfoundland dog emerged, stretched, shook himself, and looked round. As soon as he caught sight of the strange child sitting by the cradle, he showed his teeth, and uttered a low growl. Poor Mary was dreadfully terrified. What should she do? If she were to stir or cry out, he might spring at her and tear her to pieces before any one could come to her rescue. Therefore she bethought herself to try coaxing. She remembered to have seen her father once conciliate a ferocious dog in this manner, when she was out with him; and so, frightened as she was, she ventured to speak to him.

"Poor fellow! poor old fellow."

The dog relaxed his countenance somewhat, and came a

few steps nearer. She spoke again, in a low, sweet voice.

"Doggy, good doggy, you won't bite a poor little girl, will you?"

The dog advanced close to her side. She took courage and patted his back, though her hand trembled a little, still talking in the same pleasant way, and very soon the creature sat down and laid his head caressingly on her lap. Little Mary was greatly relieved, and resumed her sewing. This animal had a great antipathy to children past the age of infancy; caused, undoubtedly, by his having been constantly teased and worried by the little Smiths. He was the terror of all the urchins in the neighborhood, who would scamper off whenever they saw him. He was not accustomed to kind words, and they had a magical effect upon him, when uttered by Mary's sweet, child-like voice. So from this time, Bounce and the little girl were the best of friends.

When Mrs. Smith came in shortly after, she was exceedingly surprised at the phenomenon which met her eyes. After her astonishment had in a measure subsided, she inquired "how that dog came there." Mary answered that he came from under the bed.

"Well, how came he to be so friendly with you?"

"I don't know, indeed," said Mary, "only I thought he was going to bite me, so I said, 'poor fellow,' and talked to him, and after awhile he came up to me very good."

"So you've been coaxing him, hey! Well, I'll let you know I didn't get you here to play with the dog; here Bounce, get out, you nasty squadruped;" and she assisted him with her foot to obey the command.

The commotion awaked the baby, whereupon his mother took him up, and then ordered Mary to "fly round and put the room to rights." The child was very expert at "putting to rights," for she had been taught to assist her mother in this way, but she never before had quite so unpromising a field to work upon.

"How can I ever get it to rights?" thought she; "it is so dreadfully to wrongs." But what with her own ideas of propriety, and Mrs. Smith's instructions where to place *this*, and how to fix *that*, she did at length succeed in getting the room into a state something like order; a nearer approach to it in fact, than had been achieved in a long time.

"Hereafter," said Mrs. Smith, "I shall expect you to do this every morning without being told; d'ye hear?"

Mary answered in the affirmative, and then her mistress told her to *bring on* her sewing, as she wanted to see what *sort* of work she made of it. Mary brought it to her, and she at once pronounced it "distress-ed," the stitches, she said, were a foot long — she wondered that a *great girl* like her couldn't sew better, and ordered her to take more pains in future. Mary said "she could sew a good deal better when she had a thimble, but she had not brought hers."

"So you haint fetcht no thimble, hey? Well, it's curious your ma didn't think of it. Shouldn't wonder if you hadn't any."

"O, yes ma'am, I've got a nice silver one, that father gave me on my last birthday before he went away."

"Silver thimble for a young one like you that's all the while a growing, a bright idee, I must say, for folks in your situation."

"But mother said when it's outgrown I can give it to some little girl that's littler yet than I. So I mean to give it to Hannah Fenno, she's only four, and when she gets too big for it, she can give it to little Ellen, and after Ellen, little Maria, that's a baby now can have it, and so you see it never'll be lost."

"Well, I declare! I *did not* know there was anybody so green in creation! give away a silver thimble, when you can't get vittals to eat, nor clothing to cover your surfisses. But it's a mystery to me that your ma didn't have you fetch it along."

"I suppose she didn't think you'd want me to sew."

"Didn't, hey? I wonder what she calcilated to have you do all the time the babe's asleep; hold your hands and play lady?"

To this question the child made no reply, but she ventured to ask if she might go home and get her thimble.

"There! jest as I knew 'twould be, ready to jump at any excuse to trot home. But I'll tell you *what*, Mary Elmer, once for all I tell you, and do you listen to me and remember what I say. I aint a going to have no running back and forth every day from our house to yourn, d'ye hear?"

"O, no, not every day, of course; but only once in a while to see the baby, you know," said the little girl timidly.

"Yes, yes," responded Mrs. Smith, snappishly. "You couldn't exist I s'pose, without seeing that elegant curly-headed cherubim once in a while. And then 'twould be so interesting to me to have you come back and ding-dong it into my ears the rest of the time. A wonderful help you'd be to me in such a case. No, you aint to go home at all, I give you to understand. D'ye hear?"

Mary would have answered, but something came up in her throat and prevented her. She tried to choke it down, in vain, and after a moment she burst into tears.

"You great cry-baby," said Mrs. Smith; "I've a great mind to *send* you home and let you all starve together, or go to the poor-house."

These words alarmed the child, and she said hurriedly, "O, don't send me home, Mrs. Smith, mother cannot provide for us all. I'll try to be good, I won't cry any more."

Mrs. Smith was graciously pleased to be mollified at these promises, and after giving Mary a lecture touching her future conduct, dwelling at large on the poor-house and starvation in case of any act of disobedience, and her own kindness in being willing to save her from such a fate, she brought out Josephine's thimble for her to use until she could have an opportunity to send for her own. She soon after told her to take the "babe" into the kitchen for his dinner. Mary obeyed, and Mrs. Smith followed.

In the kitchen Mrs. Smith passed the greater portion of her time. She was unaccustomed to servants, and wholly ignorant of the proper manner of treating them. She had not the slightest confidence in Jerusha. Not because she had any reason to doubt the girl's honesty, but because she regarded all "hired girls" as the natural enemies of their employers, and ready to take advantage of every opportunity to defraud them. She therefore kept up a system of petty espionage over all Jerusha's movements, both to see that she did not purloin or waste anything, and to be sure that she was constantly busy, and not trying to slight or "shirk off" her work.

Therefore, whether she had anything to do in the kitchen or not, she was generally there; for the most part gossiping with Jerusha, and asking her all sorts of questions about families where she had lived, which the girl, like many others when encouraged, was ready enough to answer.

Occasionally, however, Mrs. Smith was visited with an attack of reserve. A sudden sense of her own greatness and importance as mistress of the house, came over her, and she determined to let Jerusha "know her place." At such times her bearing towards her "drumstic," as she called her, was *dignified* in the extreme. She moved about with a queenly air, and although she continued her visits to the kitchen as usual, she always brought with her "Thaddeus of Warsaw" (the only book in the house), and pretended to read while she kept a good look-out upon Jerusha. These attacks occurred just after she had received a call or an invitation from some one whom she considered *genteel*, or after a *spat* with Jerusha, which was no rare occurrence. Jerusha, who was a shrewd girl, and knew the difference between a "lady" and "no lady," was both provoked and amused at these "genteel fits," as she called them.

But let us not forget J. Pixley's dinner. This consisted of a large quantity of mashed potato well buttered, the soft part of a huge piece of apple-pie, and a bowl of milk. Mary thought it a "funny" dinner for a baby of ten months not yet weaned, but she did not dare to say so.

While she was feeding him the children came in from school, and a terrible uproar ensued. The girls made themselves merry for a while in commenting upon little

Mary's appearance; particularly her curly golden hair, which they considered vastly inferior to their own mud-colored pigtails, and then fell to quarrelling as usual, while Ferdinand amused himself by jogging her elbow, to make her spill the baby's food. The poor child was frightened at the conduct of the great rude boy, and was just on the point of crying again, when the entrance of Bounce diverted the young gentleman's attention from her. The dog had barely time to run up and greet his new friend with a wag of his tail, when the same tail was seized by Ferdinand, who began to drag him about the room by it. Bounce never would bite his master's children, but he often barked and snarled terribly under their treatment. At this indignity he sent forth a succession of yells which alarmed Mary, although she did not blame him at all. The yelling of the dog, the shouts of Ferdinand, and the boisterous quarrelling of the two girls, created a concert such as the quiet little creature had never heard before.

"Get out o' the house every live soul of you," screamed Mrs. Smith. "I can't stand this racket, and I won't stand it." Then seeing that the children did not start, she seized a broom exclaiming, "If you won't go I'll make you go," and drove them forth into the back yard, with orders to stay there till dinner was ready.

And then Jerusha proceeded to set the table. They ate in the kitchen. The dining-room was only used when they had company. While Mary was yet feeding the baby, Mr. Smith returned from his store dragging along Columbus, who was roaring at the top of his voice.

"If ever I take this boy to the store again" — thus

far had Mr. Smith proceeded, when Mrs. Smith broke in.

"I wonder what's the reason you're forever tormenting that child. Lummy, my son, what's pa been doing to you?"

"He's been 'hipping me," blubbered the cherub.

"Whipping you, hey? Mr. Smith, I should like to know what business you have to whip this boy?"

"I whipped him because he deserved it; he's done more mischief at the store this morning than his neck's worth, confound him!"

"Mischief, hey! that's a likely story! come here to ma, Lummy, darling!"

Columbus obeyed, and took refuge in his mother's lap; and then turning to his father, said with an air of great satisfaction,

"E ce, ya ya, I don't tare for you."

Dinner was now ready, and little Mary was not sorry when Mrs. Smith sent her back in the bed-room with the baby, to wait until they were through. She was beginning to feel very hungry, but she thought she would rather go without her dinner altogether, than to sit down with the children, to say nothing of their parents. When at last she was called out to dinner, there was no one there beside Mrs. Smith, Jerusha, and Columbus, who was still at the table, being always allowed to sit and stuff himself as long as he chose. Mrs. Smith took the baby, and motioned Mary to — not a seat, but a stand by a very dirty plate which one of the children had used. Jerusha, who had dined (she always ate with the family excepting when they had company), offered to wait upon the little girl, but Mrs. Smith declined, saying she would attend to her

herself. She then put a large potato on her plate, cut it up in chunks, and sprinkled salt over it. To this she added a very small piece of meat, and then told Jerusha to take off the dishes. In obeying this order, the girl, as she took up the bread plate to take it away, offered it to Mary. Mrs. Smith pushed it quickly from her, saying,

"She don't need bread with her potato."

Mary did want a piece of bread, but she dared not to say so. There was a small piece of pie left on Jerusha's plate. To tell the truth she had reserved it on purpose for little Mary. She handed the plate to her, saying as she did so, "Would you like this bit of pie?"

Mary thanked her, but before she had time to take it Mrs S. said with much excitement, —

"Columbus may want that."

"He's got more on his plate now than he can manage, and he's as full as a tick already," said Jerusha. "And besides it's a piece I saved a purpose for her," and she slipped it off on Mary's plate.

"Jerusha!" said Mrs. Smith, turning very red with anger. "When I said I'd attend to her myself, I *meant* so. And I wish you'd mind your own business, and not go to loading down her plate and stuffing her with vittals you haint any right to."

"I didn't mean to stuff her," replied Jerusha, "I thought there was no harm in giving her that little piece of pie."

"Don't you know that such children will always make themselves sick overloading if their food aint portioned out to 'em. It was for her good, of course, that I didn't want she should have the pie."

"And for Columbus's good too, I s'pose that you

wanted he *should* have it, I don't know why 'taint as bad for him to overload as for Mary."

As soon as Jerusha had delivered this speech, she began to sing, the way in which she usually terminated the frequent spats between herself and Mrs. Smith, for whom she had not the smallest respect.

After this scene, our little Mary was too much frightened to eat the pie, and taking the baby returned to the bedroom, (Mrs. S. had not yet learned quite enough of gentility to call it "the nursery,") Mrs. Smith banged after her, enraged at not being able to have the *last* word with Jerusha. On reaching that apartment she threw herself down in the rocking-chair, rocked furiously for a few minutes, then jumped up, took down "Thaddeus of Warsaw," from a shelf in the closet, and banged back into the kitchen.

During the afternoon Mary had only occasional glimpses of her, when she came and poked her head in at the door to see how matters stood there, to administer a warning or threatening word to the poor little nurse, and then hastened back to her favorite post. It was a doleful afternoon to the child. The baby fretted almost constantly. Mary thought his *overloading* had something to do with it. It rained and therefore he could not be taken out in his little wagon. She tasked all her powers to amuse him. She talked to him, sang to him, took him to the window and tried to interest him in the sights outside. But the only way that she could quiet him at all, was by carrying him up and down the room.

O how her poor little arms ached! for he was a very fat, heavy child. Once they gave out entirely, and she was compelled to drop him into the cradle to rest them. But

he screamed so tremendously that it brought his mother from the kitchen, and she gave Mary a terrible scolding for "letting him lie there and cry." Mary said she had only laid him down a little while to rest her arms.

"Time enough for that when he's asleep," said the affectionate mother, "don't you let me catch you doing so again."

So Mary took him up and walked with him; up and down, up and down, until she felt as though her ankles would break and her arms drop off. At last it occurred to her how very tightly his mother had pinned his clothes in the morning, and she thought that after such a dinner as he had eaten they must be very uncomfortable. She ventured to examine. They were very tight indeed, she could hardly get her finger under them. She knew he must be suffering on that account, and after some hesitation she determined to loosen them if possible. This was no light task for her, but she accomplished it after a time. She carefully extracted the pins. But when she had got them all out, and begun to put them in again, her fingers trembled a little, she was so fearful of pricking the baby.

"O baby," she said, "why doesn't your mother have strings on your clothes, as my mother does on little Georgey's? I'm so afraid I shall hurt you."

But she did not hurt him. He was much more quiet while she was *undoing* and *doing him* over, and when she had finished, his cries ceased entirely. Mary had really done this nice little piece of work as well as any grown person could, and the child was completely relieved. He stretched his limbs out to their full extent, and seemed delighted to be able to do so. Indeed, Mary fancied that he looked up gratefully in her face, and she felt an interest in

the homely little thing, that she had not felt before. She kissed him, and he tried to return the caress, then laying his cheek against hers fell asleep in a few moments.

"Dear baby," said Mary as she laid him in his cradle, "how glad you are to be made comfortable; perhaps you will get to love me though your mother doesn't, but O how tired I am!" And throwing herself on the floor at full length, she stretched out her arms and enjoyed for a few minutes the luxury of resting.

"I must be careful not to rest too long," she thought, "or Mrs. Smith will come and be angry with me. I'll be up directly and go to my sewing." But "directly" she began to think it was very pleasant to lie so, and then she had a confused idea of not caring whether Mrs. Smith came in or not, and then — she was asleep.

Fortunately Mrs. Smith did not come in during her nap, which was soon cut short by a great noise under the window. It was the young Smiths returning from school. She was at first alarmed to find that she had been asleep, but was reassured on seeing the baby just as she left him, and sitting down on her little stool began to sew. She had just finished one end of the towel when the baby waked, and she took him into the kitchen for his supper, as Mrs. Smith had directed. The family were taking tea.

"I was in hopes that young one wouldn't wake till we got through," said Mrs. Smith, as she began to prepare his supper, for which he was clamoring loudly. This meal fully equalled his dinner in quantity, although it differed in quality; being a bowl of crackers and milk, accompanied by a large ginger-cake. She placed them on a stand near the tea-table, where she could keep an eye upon Mary, and see that she did not "eat it half up herself," and then

the little girl sat down, and began the process of stuffing the infant Pixley.

While Mrs. Smith was looking round to watch Mary, Columbus, who sat in a high chair near her, reached out to help himself to something, and in so doing turned over her tea-cup. She gave him a ringing box on the ear, called him a "tormented *tyke*," and was in the act of putting him down from the table, when his father interposed, caught him up, chair and all, carried him round and seated him next to himself, saying it was shameful to cuff a child for a mere accident.

Columbus, finding himself in security, cast a look of exultation at his mother, and pouting out his lips informed her that he didn't tare for her! The three elder children, who had successively undergone the same process of training in their earlier childhood, and who gave daily and hourly evidence of its legitimate effects, applauded the boy's spirit with such expressions as these: "That's you, Lum!" "Stand up for your rights!" "Give it to her!" Ferdinand even went so far as to propose "Three cheers for Lum!"

Mr. Smith was highly delighted at this piece of wit, and laughed heartily; but Mrs. Smith, not viewing it in the same light, told Ferdinand to "hold his tongue." This command the young gentleman obeyed literally, by thrusting out that member and taking it between his thumb and finger; at which performance the merriment of the young ladies became excessive. Mrs. Smith stormed, Mr. Smith escaped to the store, and the "table broke up in confusion."

Mrs. Smith then removed the cakes and apple-sauce that remained, she kept all such things under lock and key, and always took care of them herself. Having cleared the

table of every thing eatable, excepting one piece of bread and a little apple-sauce left on her husband's plate, she plastered the latter on the bread, and placing a cup of water beside it, took the baby from Mary and told her to go and eat her supper. Jerusha did not interfere although she looked round several times as though she wondered why Mrs. Smith did not go to her own room with the baby, as she usually did directly after tea, there being nothing on the table to require her attention. Mrs. Smith, however, did not take the hint, but remained until Mary had eaten her small allowance, and then giving her the "babe," sent her back to the bed room, where she found that the two girls had preceded her. They had called Bounce in, and when Mary entered were adjusting an old shawl over his back, at which the dog was greatly annoyed.

One corner of the shawl had a hole in it. This they drew over his tail, and having tied the other two corners round his neck, pronounced it a first-rate saddle. Bounce did not submit patiently, but growled and snarled all the time. The girls, however, knew by experience that his growling when directed at them meant nothing, and so they continued to tease him in every possible way, and to laugh and shout at his vain efforts to disengage himself from the shawl. Mary felt very sorry for the poor creature.

"O girls, don't plague him so," said she, "see how bad it makes him feel."

"Who told you to stick in your gab?" said Henrietta.

"Who cares if it does make him feel bad?" said Josephine.

Mary ventured to say that *she* cared, and again besought them to take the shawl off.

"Just hear her, Jo," said Henrietta, "what business is it of hers what *we* do?"

"Sure enough, the little nasty *pot-wrastler*," responded the amiable sister. "Come, Hen, let's set him on to her."

This proposition was received by Hen with great glee.

"Seek her, Bounce, seek her!" she said, clapping her hands, and pointing at the little girl. The dog turned and looked at Mary. It was not such a look as that with which he had greeted her in the morning, but one of supplication It seemed to say "Will *you* not help me? or do you mean to join my tormentors?"

"Go it, old fellow! seek her!" cried both the girls, clapping their hands with renewed vigor.

"Poor Bouncey! poor Bouncey!" said Mary, in those sweet low tones of hers, which had already won him.

As soon as he heard her voice, he ran directly up to her and licked her face, uttering at the same time a pleading moan. She immediately went to work to extricate him from the shawl. A rather difficult task because of the baby on her lap. But she succeeded after a few moments, to the great delight of the dog. He jumped about licking her face and hands, and also bestowing his caresses upon the baby, whom the sagacious creature had discovered to be the object of her care, much to the astonishment of Hen and Jo, who had witnessed the scene in silent wonder.

Just then Mrs. Smith came in and, seeing Bounce, demanded angrily "who let that dog in there."

"Mate let him in," said Henrietta without hesitation, at the same time winking at Josephine.

"O no, no, Mrs. Smith," said Mary. "I didn't let him in, did I, Josephine?"

"Indeed you did, and you know you did," answered that unscrupulous young lady.

"And you lie if you say you didn't," chimed in Henrietta.

"You little hussy"—began Mrs. Smith.

"Now I guess you'll catch it, Mate," said Jo (Mate was the euphonious nickname which the children had given her).

"O how can they say I did it?" sobbed the poor child, as the tears rushed to her eyes; "he was here when I came in and they were putting the shawl on him."

In her agony she appealed to Bounce himself.

"Don't I tell the truth, Bounce? I didn't let you in, did I?"

Bounce could only wag his tail in reply, at which the girls laughed immoderately and said it meant "yes, you did." Mrs. Smith turned him out, and then catching Mary by the shoulder, and shaking her almost hard enough to dislodge J. Pixley from her lap, addressed her thus:

"So you expect me to believe *you* against both the girls do you—you good-for-nothing little hussy! Didn't I tell you this morning that I wouldn't have that dog in here? What possest you to let him in—say?"

Mary could scarcely articulate "I didn't let him in."

"Don't tell *me* such a lie as that," screamed Mrs. Smith, giving her another and harder shake, while the girls looked on with entire satisfaction.

"She didn't let him in, ma," said Columbus, issuing from his sister's bedroom adjoining, whither he had gone on a voyage of discovery like his famous namesake.

"What have you been doing in there, you little plague?" exclaimed both the girls, hoping to prevent his giving any further information. But Mary too, had caught his words, and said imploringly,

"You know I didn't let him in, don't you, Lummy?"

"Yes, I know you didn't do it. Hen letted him in,

she opened the window and talled him in. Jo talled him too."

Before this speech was finished the girls had vanished. Mrs. Smith saw at once that the boy spoke the truth, and that her daughters had told a lie. But she said nothing to make amends to the poor child who had suffered so severely in consequence of it. She commanded Lummy to "stop his talking," and then saying it was time to undress the "babe," took him from Mary's arms and told her to put Columbus in bed. He slept in a crib in the girls' room. At first he utterly refused to go, and his mother had just announced her intention to "give it to him," as soon as she was done with the baby, when Mary induced him to comply by promising to tell him a pretty story, which promise she faithfully kept by relating the wonderful history of "Mother Hubbard and her dog," which had such a soothing effect upon Columbus that he was asleep before it was finished.

When Mary returned, Mrs. Smith was ready to deliver up J. Pixley to her charge to be walked to sleep. She did not notice the loosening of his underpinning, which gave his little nurse the courage to go through with the process of relieving him thus as often as she found him suffering from being pinned too tight. She then went to the kitchen where she had "something to do." This something the reader will, perhaps, fancy to have been a boxing and scolding of her girls for the lie they had told her. By no means. This grievous sin was passed over without a reprimand — without even an allusion to it, when every day she punished her children for faults that were nothing in comparison with it.

CHAPTER VII.

MARY walked with the baby for some time but he showed no signs of sleepiness, his afternoon nap had made him wakeful. He was quiet, however, and at length she ventured to lay him down awake, for to say the truth, her arms could hold out no longer. When Mrs. Smith came back nearly an hour afterwards, with a candle, she found Mary and the baby both fast asleep, the latter on her little stool with her head resting against the cradle for it was long after her ordinary bed-time. Mrs. Smith was vexed with herself for not having left a light that Mary might have gone on with her sewing. She roused her with two or three smart raps on her back, called her a "lazy thing," and scolded her roundly for "shirking" in that way when she might have gone and got a candle and sewed, instead of snoozing away the time. Mary was too worn and sleepy to comprehend all that Mrs. Smith said, and rubbing her eyes she asked if she might go to bed.

"You may as well," returned Mrs. Smith, "for I see plainly you aint a going to be good for anything in the evening; come along, you're to sleep with Jerusha."

She led the way up the back stairs, to a desolate looking garret room, whose unplastered walls admitted many a ray of star-light ("there was no need of finishing off a servant's room"). It contained a dirty bed and one old

chair. Some nails were stuck round in the beams for hanging clothes on, and several of them were appropriated by Jerusha's scanty wardrobe.

Mary's own little basket sat on the floor in one corner, Jerusha had carried it up. Mary was not a coward, but she had that dread of strange, lonely sleeping rooms which is natural to childhood, and she inquired timidly whether Jerusha would be up soon.

"What, you aint afraid I hope," said Mrs. Smith, "a great girl like you afraid of the dark! I'm ashamed of you. Come! be spry, take off your clothes and jump in. I can't stand here all night waiting for you. Hereafter you're to come up alone, and without a light."

So the trembling child undressed herself as quickly as possible, took a night-gown from her basket, hurried it on, got into bed, and was left alone in the dark uncomfortable room. She was thoroughly awake now, and despite her weariness, she could not get asleep. She felt so forlorn and friendless, alone in the world as it were. She thought how happy she had been with her mother and little brothers, and she began to weep bitterly that she must be away from them, not even permitted to go and see them. She thought of good Mrs. Maddock, and how she had said to her as she was coming away, "You must run round very often to see us." She thought of Mrs. Lee, and a vague notion crossed her mind that if *she* had been at home, all would have been different, she wondered whether she would ever come back. Then she thought of her dear father, and wished that she was in the "Good Place," with him, where there is no more trouble, — and that reminded her that she had not said her prayers. So she rose on her knees in the bed and repeated them devoutly,

Then lying down again she comforted herself with the thought that if she tried to be good and do right always, God would take care of her, and in the end all would be well. With this feeling, she soon dropped asleep.

Not long after, Jerusha came in. She stepped softly up to the bedside, and holding the stump of a candle which she carried so as to reveal the face of the sleeper, she looked at her for a moment. The tears were still standing on the quiet face, although her last waking thoughts had left a peaceful expression there.

"What a pretty little creetur!" thought Jerusha. "I almost hate to wake her, she must be so tired."

She then put down the candle, and touched the child's forehead lightly, at the same time pronouncing her name.

"Mother! mother! did you call me!" said Mary, opening her eyes and fixing them wonderingly upon quite a different face from her mother's.

"Don't be frightened," Jerusha said gently. "It's only me — Jerusha coming to bed."

"O yes, I know now. I thought I heard my mother calling me."

"I guess you was dreaming about your mother."

"Perhaps I was."

"Don't you feel pretty tired?"

"Yes, quite tired, the baby is so heavy."

"And some hungry too, aint you? I know I often feel quite hungry after I've worked hard all day."

"Yes, I do feel rather hungry."

"Well take this, 'taint a good thing to go to bed hungry." And she drew from her pocket one of the large ginger-cakes that had been on the table at tea, — her own allowance, which had found its way from her plate to her pocket, while Mrs. Smith was overhauling Columbus."

"Thank you, Jerusha," said the little girl with evident pleasure. "Did Mrs. Smith know you brought it to me?"

"She saw me take it, eat it up, you'll feel the better for it." So Mary sat up in bed and ate the cake with a good appetite while Jerusha was undressing. In the fulness of her gratitude, she said,

"It was very good in you Jerusha to think to bring me something."

"Law no. I only reckoned you might like a mowful. I can fetch you something amost every night, but you needn't say nothing about it, for Ferdinand would make fun of us for eating in bed you know."

Jerusha had perceived Mary's fear and dread of this odious boy, and thus availed herself of it to prevent the child's exposing her. Not on her own account however. As far as she was concerned, she would not have cared a straw if Mrs. Smith had found it out, but she feared bringing trouble upon the little girl who already had enough to bear.

Jerusha, rough and coarse as she was, had good impulses, not often drawn out, it is true, in such a life as hers had been. She was naturally affectionate, but she had never been treated with affection, in fact she had never met with real kindness. She was an orphan. Her earliest recollections were associated with an almshouse from which she was taken when very young by a farmer's wife who felt no greater interest in her welfare than did Mrs. Smith in Mary Elmer's. She was knocked about and treated with much less kindness than the domestic animals of the establishment. Compelled also to perform drudgery, both in and out of doors, which would have been too hard for even a stout boy. Never spoken to by her mistress in any

but a harsh, commanding tone, and on account of her ugly face and ungainly figure made the constant subject of the coarse jibes and jests of the men about the farm, who gave her the name of "handsome Josh," it is no wonder that Jerusha developed into a very disagreeable, sulky girl. Many of Mrs. Marsh's visiting acquaintances wondered at Mrs. Marsh for keeping her, and that lady herself declared she "only did it out of pity, for she was awfully tried with the creetur." But it is not our purpose to relate Jerusha's history at length. Let it suffice to say that when about fifteen, she contrived to run away, and by dint of begging along the road, now a meal and now a ride, in the course of a few days she had travelled more than a hundred miles. She cared not where she went. Her only wish was to go far enough to escape forever from Mrs. Marsh. She did not yet consider herself entirely safe, but being very weary she determined to stop for a few days at a certain large town and if possible earn enough to carry her as far as she wished to go. She presented herself at numerous doors with the question, "Do you want to hire?" but her appearance always called forth an unhesitating negative, until she applied, almost discouraged, to the keeper of a very large hotel, where servants were always in requisition. She had so little confidence, and had learned to think herself such an object of disgust, that she was quite surprised when the proprietor, after a few questions to ascertain her capacity, engaged her for a month. When he inquired what wages she wished, she answered,

"O anything you please; I never worked for wages and don't know what I ought to have."

He looked at her for a moment with some surprise, but not being over scrupulous about his hired people if they

but did their work well, he asked no further questions, but conducted her into the kitchen where she was soon hard at work.

Here for a while she experienced the same treatment that she had always endured elsewhere. She was the butt of all the servants, both male and female. But she never answered again. In fact she never spoke at all excepting as her work required it. She was silent, and always busy. At length they ceased to annoy her, or to try to penetrate the mystery which surrounded her, and left her to herself.

That important personage, the "head cook," I should have said before, had appreciated her from the first. Jerusha's business was to assist her, and she protested that she had never before known a young girl so faithful, or one who would do half as much hard work in a day; without complaining too. The work was indeed hard, but comparatively light to the poor girl who had been accustomed to such arduous tasks as were exacted from her at Farmer Marsh's. The accounts of her usefulness and industry rendered by this functionary to the master and mistress of the establishment, made them very desirous to retain her after the expiration of the month, and Jerusha would willingly have stayed now that she had become contented in her new situation, and found herself giving satisfaction, had she not a few days previously caught a glimpse of a man who was a near neighbor and intimate acquaintance of the Marshes. He was just driving away from the door as Jerusha came out to draw water, and did not see her. But she had been very uneasy ever since, and determined to push on farther as soon as her month was up. No entreaties could prevail with her to prolong her stay.

Both the proprietor and his wife were extremely urgent,

and the cook was still more peremptory. But the girl continued firm. At length the mistress said with some asperity, that it did not look altogether right for her to be so anxious to leave a place with which she appeared to be satisfied. Jerusha felt hurt that Mrs. Mayhew should entertain any suspicions of her, and very sorry to be thought ungrateful to the first persons who had ever treated her with any consideration. She knew that she had done nothing wrong in escaping from Mrs. Marsh's tyranny, so she requested Mrs. Mayhew to step aside with her a little while and frankly told her painful story.

"O Mrs. Mayhew," she said in conclusion, "do you think I would willingly leave the first place where I was ever used like a human being, if I wasn't afraid every minute of being found out and forced back to that awful place where I'm bound to stay till I'm eighteen?"

Mrs. Mayhew saw at once the truth of Jerusha's story and appreciated her anxiety to be still farther removed from danger, and she no longer opposed her going. She communicated it to her husband who agreed with her, and so Jerusha was permitted to depart in peace, with several presents from Mrs. Mayhew and more money in the shape of wages from Mr. Mayhew than she had ever expected to possess at one time. The head cook was inconsolable and gave her a new gingham apron, and the other female servants who had for some time felt compunctions of conscience for their treatment of a poor girl who evidently had some sorrow at her heart, came forward and affectionately bade her good-by, which they accompanied each with some little keepsake. Mr. Mayhew also kindly advised her as to her course, and the place which he designated as the one where she would probably be as much out of danger as

anywhere, proved to be our own thriving town. She accordingly came hither. But we have already gone much farther into her history than was our original intention and must rapidly despatch it.

It was not the poor wanderer's good fortune to fall into the hands of any of those benevolent characters who are found in every city or village; five years had passed since she came here, and she had never experienced the treatment which she met with at the hotel. Wherever she had lived, her life had been rendered a burden to her by the insults and jests which were constantly heaped upon her. In many instances she was defrauded of her wages, and knew no means of redress. She of course became constantly more unamiable and surly. She regarded every one as an enemy, and herself as an object of disgust and hatred to all the world. Mrs Smith had hired her because she could obtain her services at two shillings less by the week than those of any others to whom she had applied. And now let us return to the forlorn little garret room where we left our two girls.

Mary readily promised to say nothing about eating in bed; "indeed she'd not tell of it and have Jerusha laughed at by such a naughty boy as Ferdinand." After Jerusha had lain down, Mary said innocently,

"You don't say your prayers until after you get in bed, do you?"

Jerusha, not knowing what else to reply, said, "No."

"Well, I always say mine before I lie down when I'm with my mother; we kneel down, Johnny and I, beside her and say them. But to night, what do you think! I forgot it. I forgot to say my prayers until after I'd been in bed a great while. Wasn't I wicked? And then I

had to say them where I was, for I was afraid to get out of bed in the dark in this strange place. But I must stop talking and give you a chance to say yours."

After waiting a few minutes, and perceiving that Jerusha was silent, she said,

"Do you say your prayers to yourself?"

Jerusha hesitated a moment, and then answered frankly, but with some petulance,

"No, I don't say any prayers; I never had anybody to learn me."

"Had you no father or mother?"

"Not as I remember of."

"Who took care of you when you were little?"

"Nobody. I lived in a poor-house."

"Poor-house! dreadful! that's where Mrs. Smith says I shall go if I don't be good and mind her. It's an awful place, isn't it?"

"Not so awful as some places where I've lived since."

"Where have you lived since?"

"Everywhere, and nowhere that anybody ever cared for me, and so let's go to sleep and not talk any more."

"But *I* care for you," said the child, putting her arm round Jerusha. "I care for you, and I'll learn you a prayer; not my little one, but 'Our Father;' one that's meant for everybody, big and little, to say; wouldn't you like to learn it?"

"I don't believe I can learn it if I try."

"Yes, you can if you say it over after me as I did after my mother when I learnt it."

And so little Mary began saying the Lord's prayer, pausing after each petition for Jerusha to repeat it after her, which the girl did very correctly, and when it was concluded, Mary said,

"O you can learn it very easy. If we repeat it so every night, after a little while you can say it all alone, and that will be so nice!"

Then the fair and lovely little one raised her head and kissed the forlorn, forsaken creature beside her, and a moment after was sleeping sweetly. The first kiss that had ever been imprinted upon that distorted face. The effect was wonderful; Jerusha had from the first moment that she saw the child felt an unusual interest in her; but now she knew that there was a bond between them which never would be broken. And she vowed to herself to protect the little girl to the utmost of her power. She loved Mary with the first affection that had ever warmed her icy heart. Long did she lie awake; new and strange thoughts were in her mind. She wondered whether she had ever been as innocent as the child beside her. She was almost sure she never was. And then she wondered what she should have been with a mother to guide, and teach, and love her in childhood, and she pitied from her heart the little creature who was compelled to be separated from so excellent a parent as it was evident Mrs. Elmer must be.

"How entirely different she is," thought Jerusha, "from these Smith children! It's plain enough she's had quite another sort of bringing up. Poor thing! She'll have enough to bear here. I'll do all I can for her, but dear me! that won't be much among such a set."

The next morning as soon as Jerusha was dressed, she called Mary, and after telling her that she need not hurry *her head off*, went down and left her. So the little girl threw on her clothes, said her prayers and followed. When she reached the kitchen she found a basin of water in the sink to wash herself, and a clean, coarse towel; her

own towel, Jerusha told her, and no one else should use it, and she would always find it in one particular spot, which she showed her. Mary thanked the kind girl, who then fastened her clothes, and combed her hair neatly. Not long after, ding, dong, went Mrs. Smith's bell. Mary obeyed the summons, and going to the bedroom where the infant J. Pixley was roaring in his cradle, was ordered by his mother to take him into the kitchen till she got dressed.

But we are not intending to accompany our little heroine through another day at Mrs. Smith's, for all succeeding days varied but little from the first. Every day brought with it the same round of wearying labors, of vexations and insults from the children, and harshness, nay, even abuse from Mrs. Smith, and every night the same stolen kindnesses from Jerusha, who at the end of a week could say, "Our Father" without any help from her little teacher. Afterwards they repeated it together.

Susan Elmer was surprised that Mary did not come home sometimes, and growing anxious about her, went one day to Mrs. Smith's to see the child. Mary was delighted, and would have thrown herself into her mother's arms, but the presence of Mrs. Smith restrained her. The latter gave so many plausible reasons for not allowing Mary to go home; such as the fear of its making her discontented, her extreme anxiety that she should be happy and contented, &c. &c., that Susan was reluctantly compelled to acquiesce. Mrs. Smith treated Mary with unusual kindness in Mrs. Elmer's presence; but a mother's eye is quick, and Susan saw clearly by the child's countenance that she was not happy. She told Mrs. Maddock on her return that she was convinced it was not just the place for Mary at Mrs. Smith's; but she lived in hope that

something would turn up ere long, which would change the order of affairs. She scarcely acknowledged to herself that this something for which she looked so ardently, was the return of Mrs. Lee.

In this manner several weeks elapsed, and then a change took place in little Mary's circumstances, and unfortunately, not a change for the better. Mrs. Smith's suspicions had been for some time excited by the rapid disappearance of certain articles from Jerusha's plate at tea. At length, by very close watching, she actually *saw* the transfer of a buttered rusk and piece of cheese from plate to pocket. It was indeed the poor girl's own portion. She was never allowed to take anything twice, and this piece of self-denial she daily practised to keep her little favorite from starvation.

Mrs. Smith said nothing. She pretended not to see, but she determined to find out "what became of the victuals." She therefore kept her eye on Jerusha all the evening, but discovering nothing, she followed stealthily up stairs soon after the girl went to her room. She bent her ear close down to a crack round the door, and heard Mary thank Jerusha for the rusk and inquire whether she would not like to eat a piece of it herself.

"O no," returned Jerusha, "I don't want any; I brought it all for you."

This was enough for Mrs. Smith. She opened the door suddenly, and stood before the two astonished girls, a perfect picture of rage and malice.

"I've caught ye at last! you nasty, underhanded snoops. I've long suspected this, and now I'm satisfied. What business have you to be a stealing victuals to bring up here and stuff that young one? say!"

Jerusha, who was somewhat alarmed at first, had time to recover her composure during this tirade.

"*Stealing*, did you say?" she asked, looking the woman full in the face.

"Yes, stealing; carrying off my victuals unbeknown to me to feed that young one."

"Mrs. Smith! I never stole a mou'ful of victuals from you in all my life, and you know I didn't. Whatever I've brought to Mary I've took from my own share, that you was willing I should have. I've robbed myself to keep her from starving, poor little creetur! If *that's* stealing, I'll steal again."

"You would, hey? You say that to my face, do ye?"

"Yes, I do, and to any other face of clay you'll bring on."

"You sassy, impudent trollop! quit the house this minute. I won't harbor ye no longer."

"Very well, pay me my wages and I'll quit to-night."

"Wages! you're a pretty one to talk about wages! Not a red cent do you get out o' me after such conduct."

"So you don't mean to pay what you owe me? Mrs. Smith, I've worked hard and faithfully here for three months, and you've only paid me for the first month of the time. I sha'n't leave the house till I get the rest that's due me."

"Sha'n't, hey?"

"No, I sha'n't."

"Well, I guess we'll see who's mistress here."

With these words Mrs. Smith slammed the door furiously and went down stairs. During this colloquy, little Mary lay buried under the bed-clothes, trembling from head to foot. As soon as Mrs. Smith was fairly gone, she uncovered her head and said in great distress,

"O, Jerusha, what have you done? What is Mrs. Smith going to do? What will become of me if you go away?"

"Don't feel so bad, Mary," said Jerusha, beginning to undress. "I know well enough what she'll do; she'll be all over it by morning, and want me to stay."

"O, I'm so glad."

"Wait a minute. I sha'n't stay, if I get my wages, and Mr. Smith won't dare to hold onto 'em, if *she* wants to ever so much; and I shall clear out in the morning."

"O, how badly you make me feel! There's nobody here that cares for me but you. Bounce does, but he can't do much for me. He likes to stay by me, and often growls at the children when they plague me. I know he would bite them if they should lay a hand on me; but he isn't always by when they tease me. Baby loves me, too, but he isn't like you, Jerusha. O, what shall I do?"

"Jest so, that's the only reason why I hate to go, you poor little creetur. But maybe I can do something for you after I go."

"What can you do then?"

"Why, if can't I do anything else, I can go and tell your mother all about it, and she'll come and take you home. But I know she'd like to have you get a good place where they'd be kind to you; and who knows but what I can find you such a place?"

"O, if you only could! Some place where they would let me go and see my mother when I want to, perhaps the same place where you go. But would Mrs. Smith let me go?"

"She'd have to I guess, if — but no matter, let's say our prayers and go to sleep."

After prayers, Mary sobbed out, "O, how lonesome I shall be, sleeping here alone."

"Don't you remember," said Jerusha, "what you said to Jo, t'other day, when she was bragging that nobody *saw* her take that candy? you said, 'O, Jo, don't you know that God is everywhere, and sees all we do?'"

"Yes, I remember, and how Jo laughed and made fun of me. But I'm glad you spoke of it, and I'll try to think about God watching over me, and the holy angels being around me every night when I come to bed."

"And I hope it won't be many nights you'll have to think of it in this place."

And then they went to sleep.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN Mrs. Smith reached the kitchen, she found her husband there, and requested him to "go straight up stairs and turn Jerusha out of the house." He asked an explanation. She gave it; whereupon he called her a fool for making a muss about it.

"Don't you see," he said, "how 'twill work if you send her off? She'll blaze it all round, and the whole neighborhood will be up in arms about your *starving the help*. And now's the time, you know, for us to be doing all we can to get into good society; and there's

some that's envious of us who'd be glad to make the most of it. And besides all that, you can't get another girl that will work so well and so cheap as she does. I advise you to pass it over, and let things go right on in the morning as if nothing had happened."

Mrs. Smith could but acknowledge that this would be the wisest course; and after indulging in a terrible out-pouring against Jerusha, and Mary, too, she concluded to adopt it. Accordingly in the morning she said nothing to Jerusha about leaving, nor did the latter speak of it until Mr. Smith made his appearance, when she immediately asked him for the money due to her, saying that Mrs. Smith had told her to quit, and she wished to do so as soon as possible. Mr. Smith remonstrated, but she was immovable. Even Mrs. Smith condescended to request her to remain, and said "she'd got over her feelings."

"Well, *I* haint got over *mine*," said Jerusha. "I can't stay another day in a house where I've been treated as I was last night."

"Well, you won't get any recommend," said Mrs. Smith.

"I want none from *you*," replied Jerusha, with contempt.

Smith at length saw that he could do no less than pay her the money, which he did with a very ill grace, and under a storm of words from his wife, who protested "there was no need of his paying a cent," &c., &c.

When Jerusha had received the money she went to her room, packed up her few articles in a bundle, and started off. Smith was standing in the outer door as she passed through, and said to her, with a look and tone intended to be very impressive, —

"Look here! the less you *say* the better."

"The better for *you*, I know it," she answered, with great unconcern, as she took her way down the yard. Mr. Smith's emotions at this cool rejoinder, "may be better imagined than described."

When she reached Mrs. Smith's bedroom window which looked out upon the side yard, she saw little Mary standing by it, baby in arms, and she knew that the child had stationed herself there to see her when she passed, as her favorite post was by the window next the street. Mrs. Smith was still in the kitchen, brooding in impotent rage over her troubles. Mary's eyes were brimful of tears which she could not suppress, as she stood there waiting to see the last of her only friend. But Jerusha did not venture to stop and speak, for she knew that Mr. Smith was watching her, and feared that it might increase the little girl's trials if they were to hold any conversation. So she merely said in passing, —

"Keep up, you'll hear from me soon."

It was a sultry morning in August, when Jerusha went forth, as she had often done before, homeless, friendless, and not knowing whither to go.

"But first and foremost," she said to herself, as she slowly pursued her way. "I must see if anything can be done for Mary. But dear me! where shall I go? I can't tell who'd be likely to treat her well; I'm sure I've never lived at any place here where I'd be willing to have her go, the precious little innocent creetur! Well, if I can't do anything else, I can go and tell her mother all about it, and she'll take her right home, better starve there than at Smith's. If that Mrs. Lee she talks so much about was only at home, I'd go straight there. She's a good

woman, I know, and she would take her away. Who knows but she has got home? Any how, I can go see. So she retraced some of her steps, and turning a corner, went directly to Mrs. Lee's house. As she approached it, her courage rose on seeing the front windows thrown open. She went round to the back door and knocked, but no answer. As she was about to repeat the knock, Peter Jackson, who was at work in the garden, and had seen her enter the gate, came round. In answer to her inquiries, he said that Mrs. Lee would be home that very evening. She had sent word several days before, and he had been "*given* the house a good *airen*, to be ready for her."

"O, dear!" exclaimed the disappointed girl; "I'm *so* sorry, I want to see her dreadfully."

"Important business with the missus, has the young 'oman got?"

"Yes, very important; but I'll be sure to come in this evening, rain or shine."

She then pursued her way in search of employment, and at last offered herself at a large public house, where she had never applied before. It was a busy time with them. The court being in session, the house full of boarders, and servants scarce, she was hired for a fortnight, and no recommendation required. A hard, rough place, but she was used to such places.

As soon as Jerusha was out of the house, Mrs. Smith began to vent her rage upon little Mary, whom she regarded as the cause of all her troubles. During the process of washing the baby, she improved the time in pouring forth a storm of indignation against the child. The shrill tones of her voice, the incessant screaming of J.

Pixley, the consternation of Mary, who was flying about "setting to rights," altogether made it a "scene for a painter." When the washing was completed, Mrs. Smith laid the baby in the cradle, and ordered Mary to finish hemming that apron, while she was rocking him to sleep.

"As soon as it's done," she added, "come out in the kitchen, there's plenty to do there now."

And after dropping the curtain to shade the room, she went out, and Mary took her station by the cradle.

There she sits, the patient young watcher, rocking the cradle with her foot, and while she sews, she sings too.

"Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,
Holy angels guard thy bed,"—

The baby is very quiet now. His eyes are open still, but he seems to be in a serene and comfortable state of mind. At length the lids begin to droop, Mary is watching them, and her voice falls too. And gradually as they droop lower and lower, so lower and lower are the tones of that childish voice, until they fall as gently on the baby's ear, as the "Heavenly blessings" she sings of, on his head. And now they die quite away, for the baby is fairly in Dreamland.

How fast those little fingers move over the hem! It is morning, and the child is not yet worn out with the day's labor. Besides, there is a hope in her heart. She is thinking about Jerusha, and something whispers her that deliverance is not far off. Hark! she hears a noise, a very pleasant sound. She pauses in her work a moment and listens to it. She knows whence it proceeds, for she hears it almost every day. A young lady who lives

opposite teaches a few scholars at her own home, and now these children are out enjoying their pastime in the yard. Mary loves to watch them at their play. It is next thing to being out at play herself. Many a time has she stood at the window with the baby in her arms, while her feelings entered warmly into their animated sports. She rises and steps softly across the room, as softly as she can with those great clumsy shoes which were not made to *fit*, but to be grown into, and furnished from Mr. Smith's shop, who has plenty of leather on hand of course, but Mrs. Smith "is not a going to be getting shoes every month for the hussy to bang out." In fact, she thinks it all nonsense for her to wear shoes at all, she wouldn't allow it if she didn't suppose her mother would make a fuss about it, if she should happen to come in and find her barefooted.

She raises a corner of the curtain and peeps out. How beautiful everything looks on this soft morning of the waning summer! especially that door-yard opposite. There are several fine trees in it, and the little girls are frolicking so merrily under them! A canary-bird's cage hangs from one of the branches, and he too, seems blithe and contented in his little prison. And ever and anon, one of the number runs up and speaks to him, and he carols joyously back. And all the time the pleasant-faced young lady sits by her open window regarding their sports, without appearing to be the slightest check upon their hilarity. And our little nurse rejoices too, as all sweet innocent natures do in seeing others happy.

She stands thus for some minutes, with one hand holding out the curtain, and her head thrust a little way behind. Her sewing is in the other hand, and has not advanced any since she came to the window. She has, however, but an

inch or two more to hem, and she is going on with it directly. She does not intend to look long. But that merry group is very fascinating. Ah little one! I greatly fear you will stand gazing until the teacher calls them in, unless something prevents you. But something *will* prevent you. Come away, Mary! come quickly! There is a step in the passage, a step that bodes you no good, but you are too absorbed to hear it. The she-wolf is close upon you, haste, little lamb, to your place by the cradle side, while there is yet time. She will never know that you have left it. It is but an innocent fraud, we cannot bear that you should fall into her hands to-day, when she is so furious. Come away, little lamb! still heedless! The Good Shepherd alone can protect you now. Look! she dreams not of danger, until she feels herself suddenly dragged backwards by the arm and furiously shaken.

"You miserable, wretched hussy! this is the way you mind me, is it? this is the way you stick to your sewing when my back's turned?" (Another terrible shake.) "O you deceitful little slut! I've a good mind to take your hide off, you richly deserve it, you viper!" (another and harder shake; how pale the little one turns! but she does not speak a word.) "What business have you to be a looking out of the window? I never gave you leave. 'Twould do me good to pound you within an inch of your life."

See! she is raising her arm! Hold, woman! you are not going to strike that defenceless creature! you cannot do it. Look at that poor little white face! as white as a dead child's almost, but not so calm. It is the very image of despair. Look at it! have you no compassion? no bowels of mercy? O, have you not children of your own?

There! the blow has fallen! another! yet another! God of mercy, stop her! — Hark! a ring at the door-bell —

"There, run to the door, and be thankful for getting off so well."

But the child has sunk on the floor and she does not rise She is stunned and bruised. She did not even hear the bell.

"Get along to the door, you stupid thing you," (with a kick.) "Don't you hear the bell a ringing?"

The child is on her feet now, but how changed! The bright and hopeful look which we saw on her countenance but now, is gone; an expression of agony has taken its place. But beside this, there is something strange, something never seen there before. The colorless lips are pressed closely together, and the blue eyes have an unwonted fire in them. The crushed worm will turn soon. The little girl has not uttered a sound, but her spirit is roused, and says within her, "It is enough, I will go to my mother, I will go this very day if I can but escape."

"Come, make haste for the door! and don't go scuffing along so; lift up your feet, can't ye? Show 'em into the front parlor, if it's a lady."

When Mary reached the door, she opened it to a pleasant-looking, handsomely dressed lady, who inquired for Mrs. Smith. There was but one thought in Mary's mind then, — how to escape, instead of answering immediately, she laid her hand on the lady's arm, and looked up into her face with a strange pleading expression, that surprised her not a little. But she did not speak. After a minute or two, the lady said, —

"Did you not understand me, my child? Is Mrs. Smith at home?"

Then the little girl recovered herself, and was frightened that she had dared to be so free with a stranger, and she answered quickly, and led the lady to the parlor.

When she announced to Mrs. Smith the name of Mrs. Bennet Squires, the former experienced no slight degree of elation at the honor of a visit from so distinguished a personage, for Mrs. Bennet Squires was, in fact, the leader of the *ton* in our town.

"Dear me!" she exclaimed, "so *she's* condescended to call at last. Well, I'll let her know I'm as good as she is, any how."

So she hastened to change her dress for a flaring plaid silk, stuck on her false front, with a very elaborate, untasteful cap above it. She had plenty of her own hair, but it was beginning to turn gray which she considered a great disfigurement, and always concealed on important occasions, either with an ugly dye, or a still uglier false front and cap. She also put on her California jewelry; an audacious pair of earrings, a watch and cable chain, with a pencil case and half a dozen silly looking ornaments besides dangling to it, several clumsy finger rings, and an enormous pin — full of red, blue and green stones. She was delighted with an opportunity of showing off these fine things as well as the splendor of her parlors to one of the "upper crust."

Mrs. Squires meantime was entertaining herself with a survey of the parlor decorations. She was a woman of correct taste, and a strong sense of the ridiculous, and of course could not but be highly amused at the appearance of this parvenu establishment. The huge pyramids of brass and glass which glittered on the mantel, the gaudy cornices, and other tinsel articles, she protested

made her eyes ache for a whole week afterwards; while the stiff arrangement of the furniture, about the sides of the rooms, looking as if it did not feel at home in the least, gave her a very uncomfortable feeling, and a strong desire to relieve it from its uneasy position. But the "family picture" astonished her more than anything else. She had travelled and visited many galleries of paintings, but had never seen a *work of art* that would in any degree compare with it. Her ecstasy was so great that she could not help indulging in a hearty laugh all by herself.

When her amazement at the grandeur which surrounded her had in a measure subsided, the pale, pleading face of the little girl returned to her recollection. There was an expression about it that impressed her greatly, and she knew that there must be something in the child's present circumstances which had caused her singular manner when she spoke to her, and she regretted that she had not said more to her.

The entrance of Mrs. Smith interrupted these reflections. She advanced towards Mrs. Squires with an air of perfect self-satisfaction, and much rustling of silk.

"I'm very glad to see you," she said, seizing Mrs. Squires's hand and shaking it up and down like a wood-chopper. "You've been so long a coming that I begun to think you didn't mean to call at all. Set down in the rocking-chair, do."

"I thank you, my seat is very good."

And so Mrs. Smith dumped herself down into the rocking-chair, and immediately began to rock back and forth, in a manner characteristic of nervousness and vulgarity combined. "Won't you take off your things?" and "how's Mr. Squires?" exclaimed Mrs. Smith, hurriedly.

"Mr. Squires is very well, I thank you."

"I'm very glad to hear it, health is such a blessin', feel to envy well folks, since I'm gitting so delikit."

"I noticed a beautiful little flower near the gate in you yard, Mrs. Smith, is it an annual?"

"I don't know whether that's the name of it or not, never troubled myself to know what it was; you see m nurse girl had some seeds, and my little boy asked me t let her plant 'em somewhere, so I told her to stick 'e down there; but I aint no great hand for flowers an way; but my husband has a great deal of taste in the fin arts, and so have I, and our family pictur is a satisfactio to us both. I sejested the suppositions myself, and if th cost of a thing is any criturion, I am sure it ought to b good, for Mr. Smith had to pay thirty dollars for it; fo my part I don't begrudge the money, more don't he; law what's thirty dollars to him?"

Thus she went on, rocking and talking, until Mrs. Squires who had come in on an errand, felt impatient fo an opportunity to say what she wished and be gone. A length she ventured during, a momentary pause in Mrs. Smith's volubility to take out a paper and pencil, hopin thus to attract her attention.

The latter, however, was only the more gratified, as she took it for granted that Mrs. Squires intended copying the family picture.

"I heard you drawed beautiful and I like to have folks see the pictur, that knows how to appreciate it."

"The effect is very striking," observed Mrs. Squires, "and such a painting is certainly quite an addition to a room, but of course, the greatest value of a picture is the faithfulness with which it preserves the likeness of a friend."

"Yes, it's very gratifying to have a real good picture."

"Time adds to the value of these little mementoes, when God has taken our friends forever from us," said Mrs. Squires, sadly as she placed her hand instinctively upon a little miniature of her own dear mother, who had died but recently.

"That's so," said Mrs. Smith, "but then fashions change so fast, and I never could endure an old-fashioned picture, I've got a paintin' of my mother for instance, it's a real pretty face, but dear me, the hair is stuck up so high on her head, and such an old-fashioned mankiller, I always keep it in the back chamber. If Professor Boggles will just put a new-fashioned cap and Barskeen on it, I will hang it in the back parlor, for they say it's all the fashion to have your parients' picturs in your best rooms now."

Mrs. Squires had always tried to show the respect of civility to opinions not in harmony with her own; but fearing that she might be tempted to violate her rule, if the conversation continued, she determined to make the object of her call apparent and to terminate it as soon as possible.

Making a courageous effort for this purpose she said, "I called, Mrs. Smith, to ask you to contribute something toward getting new lamps for the church. You know that our lamps are getting shabby, and many of them are broken."

Mrs. Smith's countenance fell, her voice seemed suddenly to lose its utterance, her heart sank within her and her rocking-chair which had kept time by rapid or slow vibration to the energetic or moderate demonstrations of its occupant, came to an unwonted stop.

"After all she haint come for a reglar call only a beg-

ging, and I've a good mind not to give her a single cent," thought Mrs. Smith, "but then she'll see I haint got no money to command," and she continued aloud. "Oh, yes, certainly, I'm glad somebody has got public spirrit enough to attend to them lamps; it's high time somebody took hold, but you've happened to ketch me at an unfortinate time. You see I dismissed my drumestic this morning, quite onexpected, and after Mr. Smith had gone to the store, and so I was obleeged to pay her out of my private purse, and it pretty near cleaned it out, — and Mr. Smith not being in you know, — I haint got it replenished. But when he comes home to dinner, I'll get a supply and send some round to you."

As this speech was all a falsehood, it was no wonder that Mrs. Smith hesitated somewhat in delivering it, and Mrs. Squires, who understood it to be such, was disgusted as well as amused. She, however, thanked her for the promised aid, and handed her the paper, to put down her name and the amount she would give.

Mrs. Smith looked over the names, and noticing that two dollars was the largest sum given by any one, she placed that amount opposite her own name in very large figures and handed the paper back with an air of triumph.

"I'll send it round by my nurse girl, this afternoon," she said, as if to impress upon Mrs. Squires the fact that she kept a girl to take the care of her child.

"By the way, was it your nurse girl who came to the door?"

"It was so."

"She is a beautiful child, and very young, I should think to have the care of an infant."

"I guess there aint no danger of her hurting herself,"

said Mrs. Smith, somewhat annoyed by the lady's expression of interest. "She's a complete little shirk, I only keep her out of charity, they are so awfully poor."

"Whose child is she?"

"Well her father's name was Elmer, he went to Calaforny and died there and left his family dreadful destitute."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Squires, "then she is Susan Grant's child. I had no idea they were so reduced. Susan was a very good girl."

"But poor and proud, too proud to let her sittiwation be known, but I happened to find it out almost by accident, and so I took this young one off her hands; but I don't know whether I can ever make anything of her or not, —can't trust her a minnit when I aint by to watch her, she spends half her time a lookin' out the winder when the babe's asleep, instid of sticking to her sewing."

Mrs. Squires made no reply, but soon took her leave with a feeling of sorrow for the poor little child, which Mrs. Smith's unkind words had failed to diminish, and as she continued her labors, the pale, sad face of the little girl arose often to her recollection, and she determined to do what she could to rescue her from a position which she felt must be full of misery.

CHAPTER IX.

IN the sinking of hopes and the rising of fears, which the progress of Mrs. Squires' call had developed, Mrs. Smith's amiability had in no way increased, and as Mrs. Squires had not even invited her to "return the call" as she bade her a coldly polite good afternoon, Mrs. Smith said to herself "I am almost sorry I signed the paper at all, but it's too late now."

The baby had awaked during the call, and little Mary's hands being now literally "full," Mrs. Smith was compelled to prepare dinner alone, but she had only succeeded in replacing her finery in the clothes press when Mr. Smith and the children came in, and the disorder and confusion became more intolerable than ever.

At length dinner was placed on the table, and when the more clamorous demands of the children were silenced as Smith said by "letting their victuals stop their mouths," the subject of Mrs. Squires' call was mentioned.

"I think it's high time some of them sort of folks begun to take a little notice of us; we have paid a big house rent about long enough for nothing."

"I sha'n't be in any hurry to return the call. I guess I'm as good as anybody."

"Hadn't better be too particular; it's to my interest to get in with them sort of folks."

"Yes, and be dunned for a subscription every day of

your life. That's one thing she wanted this very day; all the upper crust are signing round to get new lamps for the meeting-house, and so she wanted to see how much she could get away from us. But she's a polite beggar I must say, for she didn't come right out on the start; but it's all the same if they only get the money."

"That's so, and it's very obliging to offer to spend your money for you, but I hope you let her see you could give as much as any of 'em; folks can't be popular without its costing anything. I often see men signing ever so much for foreign missions and such like things, when I know they are distressed to death with their grocery bills; but here's the money, and you had better send Mary right over with it. You see it won't be any less for waiting, and then it will show her that we are prompt and on hand about the matter."

"Don't be in such a desperate hurry; I guess Mary can wash up the dishes before she goes."

The meal was finished; Mary went about her task, baby was unusually quiet and amiable, amusing himself with some green apples which had rolled on the floor from Ferdinand's pocket, and which he stoutly maintained a schoolboy had given him, while his mother as firmly declared that they came of her "don't-seek-no-farther tree and she knew they did."

Mary applied herself to her task with renewed energy. There was a calmness and determination in her manner in which one of greater penetration than Mrs. Smith might have read a sense of despotism and a disposition to resistance, for she had felt the spirit of insurrection rising in her heart, which already beat with accelerated pulse at the thought of escape from thraldom.

But Mrs. Smith only congratulated herself that Mary knew she had got the work to do, and as she had told her "the quicker it was done the better," she innocently thought Mary was fulfilling her own instructions. Very different, however, were the thoughts which occupied the mind of our little heroine. "It is not right for Mrs. Smith to treat me so, and if mamma knew about it she would not have me stay here another day. It will not be disobeying her if I go home," and the child was glad that the errand to Mrs. Squires gave her an opportunity of getting started on her way, and when, after her bonnet and shawl were on and she ready for a start, Mrs. Smith said, "Now take that money and go straight to Squareses, and then come straight home, and don't let the grass grow under your feet," Mary answered, with a calmness which quite surprised her mistress,

"I shall go and see my mother first." Mrs. Smith would have forbidden this rebellious act but she remembered that the very day before a little boy had brought an urgent request that Mary might be allowed to come home to see her grandmother.

Amid the contending thoughts which had occupied Mrs. Smith's mind she had quite forgotten the request, and now when it arose to her recollection, instead of sending any apology to Mrs. Elmer, she only said,

"Well, go along, gad-about, you will be a small loss here; after you have got starved out, maybe you will understand what I am trying to do for you; but mind you leave the money to Squareses, and just tell her I sent it, and don't make a little tattler of yourself, for tattling is awful mean, do ye hear?"

Mary was soon started on her journey. She was met

at Mrs. Squires' door by that lady, who was now ready to resume her morning's labors. She asked the child pleasantly to come in, but Mary was too anxious to reach her own home to stop long on the way, although the tidy sitting-room looked very inviting. A great many questions suggested themselves to the lady's mind, but she determined not to direct the child's attention to the unpleasantness of her present condition, until she could decide on some way of improving it.

On learning that Mary was on her way home, Mrs. Squires prepared a little basket of cakes and fruit for the family, and as she walked along with her, learned what she could of them, and asked her to call again at her house.

"O yes, ma'am, I will come and bring back the basket."

This was just what Mrs. Squires wanted, although she had not mentioned that the basket was not included in the little gift, but the child's bringing it back would, she hoped, give her further opportunity of learning the needs of her old acquaintance, and of furnishing to her assistance in an unobtrusive and acceptable manner. She felt greatly inclined to go home with the child that very day, but Mrs. Squires was not in the habit of acting upon new impulses, and her time had already been appropriated to the church business; therefore on bidding the little girl good-by, she gave her maiden name for her mother with messages of kind regard, and a promise to call very soon to see her.

The remembrance of Mrs. Squires' kindness made the child continue her walk with a quicker step and a lighter heart. She thought how pleased grandma would be with a nice baked apple, and how Georgy would crow and laugh over his cookey, and mamma would have no excuse for not taking one, as there were enough to go around she was very sure.

But as she reached her home she was greatly surprised, and wondered what was going on. A bedstead was leaning against the end of the house, while quilts and pillows were airing upon a clothes-line. A boy was holding some horses near the gate, while two or three grave-looking men were engaged in a quiet consultation near the door. She had begun to fear that mamma had got to move again, but felt reassured when David Gray spoke kindly to her, and before she had fairly reached the door, Johnnie came running out, saying, "Why did not you come last night, Mary, when we sent for you? grandma was almost gone then, and we all wished you was here."

As Mary passed into the house, there was not one familiar face to greet her. A coffin covered with a black pall rested upon the table in the front corner of the room. A small bouquet of violets stood on the stand in an old-fashioned wine-glass, while two grave-looking women were engaged on a mourning dress. The little girl paused a few moments to gaze in silent reverence on that venerable face which, though the animation of life had forever fled, yet seemed already touched with that triumphant brightness which betokens the dawn of immortality, she pressed her lips silently to that aged brow, and then as quietly passed up stairs to her mother's room. Mrs. Elmer was seated in her accustomed sewing-chair beside the little table, with her child in her arms, and although he had been asleep some time she did not lay him down, but pressed him more closely to her heart as she thought how few were left to claim her love or demand her care.

The little fellow, quite unconscious of the sorrow which had deprived him of his usual lullaby, had asked for the "shining star," but his mamma could not sing it for him

to-night, indeed she could scarcely see beyond the cloud of desolation and sorrow which oppressed her; yet she did not despair, for in the many trials of her faith, which had led her pathway through thorns and sorrows, she still cherished that "hope" which is "the companion given the unfortunate by pitying Heaven," and her trusting heart always found some object for gratitude or praise. And even now, she was grateful that she had been able to make her mother's last days comfortable; and that as her willing spirit had bent affectionately to her filial task, it had not been hindered by the weakness of the flesh.

She wondered if she could have done anything more for her mother during the long, weary illness, and then she looked hopefully to that blessed place of rest, where trials and changes come no more.

Mrs. Elmer clasped her daughter's hand with a faint smile of welcome, and held it long in silence; and though few words were spoken, each felt how strong was the bond of affection and sympathy which united them.

Little Johnnie soon came bringing up the little basket of apples.

"Aint these real beauties?" said he, as he selected the fairest for his mother. "And just see what lots of cakes."

"Put them on a plate, Johnnie, and offer some to the ladies down stairs," said Mrs. Elmer.

Johnnie hastened to obey the instructions, and soon returned saying, "Oh, there's the funniest-looking girl down-stairs, and she wants to see you, to tell you about Mary, she said."

"I think it's Jerusha," said Mary, starting quickly to meet her faithful friend.

Whatever might have been the enthusiasm of the meeting between the two girls, out of that house of bondage, in other circumstances, there was none now.

"I'm so glad you got away from there," said Jerusha. "You see I did not know you had come, and so I thought I would stop and tell your mother about matters and things. I've been to Mrs. Lee's, and the colored man says she is expected home to-night, but I must hurry along, for I have hired to the Eagle Tavern for a fortnight; so good-by, Mary," and the poor homeless creature started back to fulfil the duties of her new engagement.

Mrs. Maddock, who had been very much occupied in assisting to prepare Mrs. Grant for her last repose, had gone to her own rooms to discharge the domestic duties of her household; but as soon as she learned that Mary had come, she came in with Martha and Ann, to welcome her home again.

The funeral was appointed for the next afternoon, and passed off so quietly, that many living very near, and in the same street, had not even heard of a death in the neighborhood. Mrs. Lee had not been able to reach her home as soon as she had anticipated, and arrived only at the hour appointed for the funeral.

Mrs. Squires had heard of it through the clergyman, of whom she had made inquiries after the family, and had taken some pains to inform those whom she thought might remember Susan Grant and her mother in better days.

Still it was only a small, quiet funeral. Mrs. Lee had kindly sent her carriage and some money for the sexton's fee; although too much overcome by her journey and grief at the loss of her only sister, to leave her own room.

David Grey had engaged the hearse and the bearers, and his own wagon with the carriages of Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Squires, formed the little procession. Yet in her heart, Susan Elmer was thankful to give her mother so respectable a burial; and when the poor old woman had been so feeble, and helpless, and troublesome, that some had said, "It was strange God's providence did not remove her," the devoted daughter had toiled, and waited, and prayed, that her mother's life might be spared until something should occur to enable her to show her mother the respect of a proper sepulture; and her trials had never yet found the limit of her faith and patience; for even when the aged mother's words had become almost inarticulate, their last utterances were of hope and encouragement, and she had even tried to join in the chorus of the shining star, when her faculties showed many sad symptoms of decaying nature.

When the few who had come to attend the funeral had again dispersed, and the little family were once more alone, Susan's mind wandered to the little band in Paradise. That beautiful portion of Psalms, which the Rev. Mr. Bingham had chosen as the text for his hopeful discourse on the resurrection of the just, came again and again to her mind, with new significance, as she repeated, "My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." And as she remembered how her mother had by faith and prayer, and works of charity and love, made God her portion on earth, she trusted that he would now strengthen and restore the weak spirit, so long bowed by the infirmities of the flesh. Then she thought of her dear father, who had

long ago passed from the earth, and how blest and happy they would be to be separated no more forever.

And in the midst of her loneliness and sorrow came a gleam of joy, that those who are united on earth, in that holy bond which God has blest, can be separated only by Death, and that even his power is but temporary.

Then she tried to think George would be there, but her thoughts of him were so much associated with their last parting, when he had declared that he should be back again all right in a year or so, that she involuntarily exclaimed, "What if George should come back just as he said, alive and well, and rich!"

She had never set her heart upon riches, even when her husband's prospects for success had seemed fairest, and she had watched with solicitude his disappointment and depression at the failure of his cherished plans, while her heart turned more and more to the treasures which are incorruptible and fade not away. She had often made the humble prayer of Agar her own, and though poverty and sickness had been suffered to remain very near her, she had never denied her Lord or been tempted to steal, and take the name of her God in vain.

The children nestled more closely beside their mother, as the shades of evening closed around; and as the little group united in the supplicating petitions of, "Our Father who art in heaven," Susan's heart found a new cause for gratitude, that little Mary's voice again mingled with the rest. The little ones were soon lost in the calm sleep of infancy; but Susan Elmer was unusually wakeful that night, and her mind still turned to those she had loved and lost; and remembering how her mother had en-

couraged Mary's prayers for her father, even when Smith had declared him to be dead, her last waking thoughts were a prayer "that God would be with and protect them till the great day of his final coming."

CHAPTER X.

THE cares, the fatigues, and anxieties of the last few weeks, had worn upon Mrs. Elmer more than she had been aware of, and she slept much later than usual the next morning, and when she arose and tried to discharge her household duties, a strange and ill-defined presence seemed to linger about her. A something which she could neither throw off nor account for, and when in the afternoon Mrs. Maddock came in with her sewing to beguile the loneliness, she ventured to tell her of a strange dream which had often visited her pillow. She had spoken of it once, she said, to her mother, but as neither of them were superstitious believers in signs and omens, the subject had soon been dismissed from their conversation; but now as it had again returned to her, she confessed she could not wholly dispel its influence from her mind, nor could she wantonly stifle the faint hope born of that dream, even though it possessed no apparent foundation in probability; and she felt inclined to relate to Mrs. Maddock, "That she had so many times dreamed of seeing her husband, always in a

strange place, and sometimes sick and in bed, and sometimes engaged in one or another of the occupations which he had followed before leaving home; and that on every occasion he had failed to recognize her, or only spoken with the indifference of a stranger."

"That dream is as plain as day to me," replied Mrs. Maddock, "you may mark my word for it, George Elmer is not dead. I don't believe in witcheries and superstitions, my mother did not before me; but my mother believed in some dreams, and so do I. Don't you remember Scripture tells us that Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams? and don't you know how Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams?

"If you had dreamed of seeing him here, I should say it was only natural, and could be accounted for on the ground of your thinking about him so much; but your dreaming that way so many times, of seeing him in a strange place, makes me think he aint dead.

"But, Susan, what proof did you ever have that he was dead? who told you he was?"

"I never heard anything about it from any one but Smith," replied Susan.

"What, Jonathan Smith the shoemaker!" exclaimed Mrs. Maddock in evident astonishment, "I don't mean to say that it necessarily ruins a man's veracity to make shoes for a living, but mercy on us! I should sooner think of believing a dream, than of taking *his* word any time. I should not be a bit surprised if you heard from George right off.

"My Uncle William Barber went to the Patriot war, and was gone for years and years, everybody gave him up for dead; but Aunt Lavina always said he would come

back, she knew it just by a dream; and sure enough he did come back, after serving ten years at Van Dieman's Land. Every body was as much astonished as if one had arose from the dead, except Aunt Lavina; she went round smiling and smoothing out her cap-strings and saying, 'I told you so!' I don't want to raise any expectations that aint to be realized, but you may depend upon it, George Elmer is alive."

Martha and Ann Maddock came in during the evening, and each expressed satisfaction and pleasure that Mary was safe home again. "I hope you will never have her go back again," said Martha, "if I had known how shabbily she was treated, I'm sure I would have gone after her myself."

"I should be very glad to keep the children together," replied Mrs. Elmer, "but everything is so dear in the market, and we have not any garden you know."

"But," continued Martha, "it won't take a single hod more of coal if she stays at home, than if she goes, and as for vegetables, we always get our winter supply of Uncle James; and I know mother will engage some from him for you. We do all the sewing for him and the boys, and of course it don't come so high as if they went to the shop with their work, and then they bring us good measure of apples and vegetables."

It was all satisfactorily arranged. Ann suggested that Mary could sometimes go down to the village for thread and needles for them, besides holding the skeins of silk, and both the girls felt a gratification in trying to make amends for their former hastiness to the child.

As the fall sewing came in, and the hope of keeping her little family together and supporting them comfortably

seemed about to be realized, Susan applied herself to her daily tasks with renewed energy; and as Mrs. Maddock and her daughters, by their continued kindness, did all they could to diminish Mrs. Elmer's sense of obligation, a feeling of cheerful contentment, almost akin to happiness, once more stole over her.

True their daily needs required her constant labor; their clothing was of the plainest material, and their table offered none of those delicacies which are counted by so many as necessaries. There were few to sympathize with her loneliness, and she might have been less happy had not necessity compelled her to be always caring for the comfort of those dependent upon her.

It had been many months since Susan had thought of rest or recreation; but one bright Saturday afternoon in October, her work for the week being completed, Susan proposed to the children a walk to the village graveyard, and a visit to grandma's grave.

The little ones were greatly delighted with the plan, and were soon ready for a start. Georgie was carefully tucked up in Mrs. Maddock's little wagon, and Johnnie and Mary volunteered to draw him all the way, but they began to show signs of weariness before reaching the top of the hill where the burial ground was situated, and as their mamma relieved them from the task, they soon began amusing themselves by gathering the bright autumn leaves now gently falling upon the shaded pathway.

As the little party stopped to rest before climbing the rustic stile, Mary wove the leaves into bright wreaths, after patterns which Jerusha had taught her, while their mother smiled approvingly at their quiet enjoyment, as Mary placed one of the wreaths on little Georgie's head.

They soon entered the yard; and the children were silenced by that feeling of awe and reverence for the dead which nature has implanted in the heart of childhood, and which seems to survive only in proportion as its innocence is preserved.

Mary walked beside her mother, while Johnnie went before them, gazing in silence at the bright autumn flowers, or the tall monuments, on which his eye rested until they paused beside the new-made grave, where Johnnie was first to speak, as he asked "if grandma knew they had come to visit her?" While Mrs. Elmer was trying to think of some answer to the question, Mary said quickly, —

"Maybe her spirit knows it up in heaven, if her body don't know it here. Keep still, Johnnie!"

As Susan Elmer stood beside the grave of her mother, she wished that she might place upon it some memorial worthy a spot made sacred by her last repose. Then, recollecting the little bright-eyed violets which grew in Mrs. Maddock's yard, and her mother's fondness for them, she resolved to cover the mound with these humble flowers. There seemed to be an appropriateness in placing there those humble wayside blossoms which survive so many of Spring's earlier flowers, and Susan dwelt with pleasure on her little plan.

As they were preparing to leave the ground, Mary stopped to repair the little wreath, which had come apart with Georgie's rough handling, and placed it upon the grave.

"I'm afraid the wind will blow it off," said Johnnie, and he stepped back toward the stile where he had noticed some short pieces of painted slats lying on the grass beside a new inclosure.

"Will any one care if I take these?" he said, handing them to his mother.

"I think not, my dear," she answered, and placing the two pieces in the form of a cross, she laid them upon the little wreath.

The effect of that bright golden wreath lying upon the rich, deep green grass and surmounted by the little white cross, was very beautiful; to a practised artist it might have suggested the illuminated paintings of the early masters, but Susan's natural taste for beautiful things had never been heightened by artistic cultivation, and as she looked admiringly upon it, her greatest pleasure was that she could leave some token of remembrance upon the grave of her earliest and most valued friend.

While they were passing out of the yard, Mary and Johnnie exclaimed together, "Aint that pretty?" pointing toward a bright little bed of immortelles, bordered with pansies. Mrs. Elmer read the plain inscription and was pleased to find there the name and age of Dr. Lee, with the simple verse,

"He is not here, but precious is the dust
Which once enshrined the object of our love;
He is not here, but fondly do we trust
To meet him in a brighter world above."

There was something about that little gray Italian shaft and those unpretending flowers which would have pleased Mrs. Elmer, had she known nothing of her whose taste had marked the spot or of him whose memory was here so tenderly cherished; and Susan thought while looking at these memorials, of the many kindnesses of her friend and felt a degree of self-reproach that she had never been to

call upon Mrs. Lee since that lady's return from the East. True the time had been more than occupied with care and labor, but there was also another reason, which she scarcely recognized as such, and it was that feeling of hesitation which any person of true refinement has at the thought of calling as a friend upon one whose worldly position is so much above her own as was that of Mrs. Lee and toward whom she could but feel an embarrassing sense of obligation.

Then, conscious that the neglect might have the appearance of indifference or ingratitude, she resolved to seek an early opportunity to express in person the grateful regard which she had heretofore sent by Peter Jackson.

Presently Johnnie discovered a carriage driving into the yard, and Mary soon espied the ebony face of Peter Jackson, who was already showing his teeth in answer to her signs of recognition. And, strange to say, there was Jerusha, too, sitting beside Mrs. Lee in the carriage as if to support her, for this was Mrs. Lee's first ride since her illness.

They came directly to the little inclosure, and Jerusha assisted Mrs. Lee to alight from the carriage, when the latter approached Mrs. Elmer and by a gentle pressure of the hand, and a quiet smile of welcome, expressed the pleasure which the unlooked-for meeting gave her.

Jerusha and Mary were more demonstrative in their recognition, and Mrs. Lee declared the ride had benefited her so much she would remain there while Peter and Jerusha took the children a little drive around the ground. The carriage soon rolled away, and Mrs. Lee invited Susan to a seat beside her in the little yard, and as they sat there alone with the dead, each felt bound to the other by the

tender ties of friendship and sympathy as well as the strong bond of benevolence and gratitude.

Mrs. Elmer soon spoke to Mrs. Lee of Johnnie's hard question and Mary's ready answer and asked what she thought about the subject.

"I'm afraid we shall never have much definite knowledge about it," said Mrs. Lee, "it is a subject on which I often talked with Dr. Lee, and I recollect he once said, there seemed nothing unconnected with revelation which was so little known and yet so generally believed. We are told that the Druids, before Christianity was introduced into Britain, believed that the beatified soul retained the love of its country and its kind, and sometimes returned to the earth to assist the brethren by teaching them heavenly things, and to oppose the power of the Evil One. In later times many theologians have maintained that it is this mingling of the prayers and praises of the departed with those of the living which forms 'the communion of the Saints,' one article of the Apostles' Creed.

"In our own times, among the number of persons called spiritualists, a favorite theory is, that the souls of the departed are very near and not only take an interest in the fortunes of their friends on earth, but are anxious to find means of communicating that interest. While some of a still less cultivated class believe in ghosts and supernatural apparitions."

"But, Mrs. Lee, will you please give me your own ideas about it, if you will not think me rude. What do *you* think about it?"

Mrs. Lee was never anxious to express her own ideas, but she now ventured to say that to her it seemed, "that as far as human love was unmixed with human passion, it

might survive the death of the body, and if friendship and affection be founded on piety and virtue, and have its seat in the soul, it need not terminate with the existence of our material part.

"One whose judgment we are bound to respect has said, 'When our souls are placed in Paradise, the cares and secular employments of time shall cease, and our employments shall be symbolical, spiritual, holy, and pleasant.' The nature of this subject does not admit of its being made very plain to the senses, and as not much knowledge is given it is not probable much will be required, and we might, perhaps, better bestow our thoughts on subjects more directly connected with duty here, and with salvation hereafter."

Peter Jackson had now returned with Jerusha and the children, and at Mrs. Lee's request Mary was permitted to return home with her, while Master Johnnie, with an increased sense of importance, assisted his mother in drawing Georgie home.

Little Mary could scarce express the delight she felt in being once more in the well-remembered places, and after looking about the house awhile she said, "There's that dear little chair just where it was before, and there is that pretty picture, but where is Harriet?"

"Harriet is married, and she does not live here any more," replied Mrs. Lee.

"But where does she live now?" asked Mary.

"In the country near her friends," said Mrs. Lee.

"Well I'm glad I know where she is. Mamma and I have often wondered what had become of Harriet, no one told us anything about her, and we thought that she had gone with you."

"Have you never seen Harriet since I went away?" said Mrs. Lee, with evident surprise as she recollected the unheard-from note entrusted to Harriet's care.

"No, ma'am, we never saw her after you went away, and we did not know where you were gone in a long time, then Peter Jackson told us, and we were very sorry your sister was so sick, and we missed you a great deal all the time."

The child had scarcely done speaking when Mrs. Lee turned again to Harriet's letter, in which she had said, "I forwarded your note to Mrs. Elmer, before I left town, and I presume you have heard from it before this time." Mrs. Lee's first thought was to write for further explanation, for she had many times wondered at the strange silence; then remembering Harriet's subsequent intention of visiting her soon, she determined to wait Harriet's intended visit for the desired information. And as she did not know Harriet's present address, this seemed the only way practicable.

Just before little Mary started for home, Mrs. Lee told her of a little school which had recently opened near her house, and instructed the child to ask her mother's permission to attend it, kindly inviting her to come there every day for dinner, and carefully informing her that she would provide for the tuition and the necessary books; and the little girl returned home full of enthusiasm over the plan.

The brightness of that October day, the enjoyment of the children, and the unexpected pleasure of Mrs. Lee's visit, had seemed to inspire Susan with new life, to which the thought of sending the little girl to school, brought additional pleasure. She had often wished that Mary might have such advantages, but circumstances had heretofore

seemed to forbid, and she therefore set about making plans for the improvement of the child's wardrobe, which had been in no way improved by her stay at the Smiths.

Her motherly affection was stimulated perhaps, by womanly ambition, and long after the little ones were asleep she grew more and more wakeful in planning for the new enterprise, and she resolved to rise an hour earlier every morning, for the purpose of preparing Mary for school. But on awaking the next morning, she felt a dull, uncomfortable sensation in the head, her arms ached so that she could scarcely use them at all, and she was compelled to return to her bed as soon as the morning meal was finished. Mary succeeded in putting the room in order, and brought into practice all her little skill in nursing her mother; but spite of her efforts Susan Elmer grew rapidly worse, and the child went to call Mrs. Maddock's assistance.

The good woman soon answered the summons, and was grieved and surprised to find Susan suffering from a violent attack of fever. After bathing Susan's head and applying such simple remedies as were at hand, Mrs. Maddock said, "I'm sure when I come to think of it, I aint a bit surprised, in fact I've expected to see you break down every day. No live woman could endure it to be shut up as you have been so long, and working early and late, it's a wonder you did not have to give up before. You need rest and good nursing up, but you must not expect to be well in a day."

"Will my ma ever get well again?" interposed Mary, timidly; for she had been frightened before calling Mrs. Maddock, whose energetic manner did not tend to diminish her alarm.

"O yes, I hope so, but we must take good care of her;"

and turning again to Susan, she said, "I'd go for a doctor right off, but the doctors kill more than they cure, and you haven't any money to waste on them."

Mrs. Maddock again volunteered her own services, and Susan thanked her cordially, when Mrs. Maddock returned to her own room.

In the midst of her own pain Susan noticed the expression of sorrow and anxiety upon her child's face, and she said,

"Don't be frightened, my dear; I hope I shall feel better again when the fever goes off: and remember, Mary, whatever happens, it will only make everything worse to be sad and discouraged."

Then the child tried harder to summon her courage, and to put in practice those lessons of faith and patience of which her mother's life had been a constant lesson, both in example and in precept. It was well for the child that she had learned the lesson thus early.

Mrs. Maddock's fears were realized sooner than Mrs. Elmer's hopes, for Susan suffered long without any signs of improvement. Now that their only means of subsistence were cut off by the mother's illness, the little nurse's task seemed weary and almost hopeless.

When Martha and Ann Maddock first heard of Mrs. Elmer's sickness they expressed a degree of sympathy and interest in the poor woman's misfortune quite consistent with their late friendly conduct toward her; but after a few days they began to express a degree of surprise that no one came to assist in the care of her; and a slight impatience manifested itself in the oft-repeated wonder why none of the church members came near; for they were not such faultless young ladies as we meet with in stories, but such human ones as are met in actual life.

Mrs. Maddock suggested that like enough none of them knew anything about Mrs. Elmer's sickness.

"Then," said Ann, "I'll make it my business to inform them. I think what with the 'Aid Society' and the 'Home Mission,' that it is a pretty piece of work to let a woman like her suffer from neglect, or else be a direct tax upon us for board, and rent, and everything."

Mrs. Maddock made no objection to the plan, and Ann started out that very afternoon. She met Mrs. Squires on her way to the Aid Society, and soon made known to her the condition of the Elmer family, which seemed almost incredible to Mrs. Squires, for it was only a few days since she had heard from Miss Ludlow that Mrs. Lee had returned, and had taken the Elmers under her especial charge again. Miss Ludlow declared she had seen Mary Elmer in Mrs. Lee's carriage, and expressed a degree of anxiety for fear the family in general and that child in particular, would be spoiled by being taken too much notice of.

Mrs. Squires, however, made it in her way to give them a short call before going to the Aid Society, and determined to bring the case before them at that very meeting.

Ann Maddock continued her way to Mrs. Lee's, where both Mrs. Lee and Jerusha had been wondering at the non-appearance of Mary, and had begun to fear some illness to the child had prevented her from coming to school. Jerusha had never been in the habit of running out evenings, and Mrs. Lee had been very much occupied with the fall house-cleaning, and instructing a new girl, for Jerusha had only been with her a short time. Mrs. Elmer had seemed so bright and happy at their last interview that Mrs. Lee was grieved and surprised to find that she was

now suffering not only the pains of illness, but for the want of those necessaries which that sickness had rendered her unable to procure. She sent to Mrs. Elmer many expressions of sympathy and regret, and that very evening rode over with Peter Jackson to carry to her friends the more substantial tokens of her regard.

CHAPTER XI.

ITH the return of the cool autumn evenings there came back to our busy town many who had been seeking for health or recreation at the various watering-places. The spirit of locomotion which had led so many from home, now seemed to keep them active, and every local enterprise revived into a new life. The churches were better filled on the Sabbath, and many a stylish outfit which had lost its first lustre at "The Springs," now aroused bitter heart-burnings among those who had perforce remained at home.

Miss Eunice Ludlow had also returned, for she too had been "spending some time at the Springs." The family alone knew the whys and the hows of the all important though unusual event. A relative who lived at Saratoga in a style which in more modern days would have been called "Shoddy," had sent for Eunice, who by the way was an expert needle-woman, to come and assist them with their summer's sewing.

Of course Cousin John would attend to the expenses of "travelling," at least so the letter read, and he generously fulfilled the promise by procuring a pass through the influence of a baggage master. And now the visit was over and Eunice had returned home full of Cousin John's importance and the Saratoga fashions.

It had been at Eunice's suggestion that the Aid Society was invited to meet at Deacon Ludlow's again. Every one knew that the deacon's family had declared that they had done more than their part already; but Eunice felt an uneasy desire to inform her friends of the marvellous things which she had seen and heard at Saratoga.

As a regular party was deemed quite too expensive, it was decided to have the "Society." "It will be much cheaper than a party," thought Mrs. Ludlow, as she remembered the tea regulations; "and we can take a little extra pains to invite those we want, and those we don't want can be left to find it out for themselves."

The appointed day came, and with it came "The Aid Society." Among the first arrivals was Mrs. J. Pixley Smith arrayed in the stiff silk dress and the same prodigious amount of jewelry in which she had appeared on the occasion of Mrs. Squires' memorable call. Mrs. Bingham the minister's wife, wore the same brown alpaca dress and the same plain linen collar and black velvet bow which Miss Eunice declared she had stuck to *ever since the year one*. Mrs. Squires appeared in a dark worsted dress and rich honiton collar fastened with a cameo pin, which Mrs. Smith thought was very bad taste for any one that could afford new fashioned jewelry as well as "Miss Squares," as she persisted in calling her.

We shall not trouble you with the details of the dress of

Mrs. Sharpe, Mrs. Brown, and the number of ladies who are already absorbed in listening to Miss Eunice's wonderful accounts of her travels, while she dwells with enthusiasm upon the elegance of Cousin John's establishment, and the remarkable accomplishments of little Cousin Una who is studying French arithmetic, although she is only eight years old.

It could not but be observed, that Miss Eunice became somewhat less communicative after the arrival of Mrs. Squires. Knowing as she did that Mrs. Squires could easily detect the parts of her story in which she had been wholly indebted to imagination for her facts; and as she thought of the experiences Mrs. Squires might relate if she were only disposed to appreciate her advantages, she looked at Mrs. Squires with pitying wonder, for her lost opportunities.

There was not any work of importance on hand. The last thing the society had attempted was a dozen shirts for Mr. Bingham; and these being finished, the question in order was, to what they should next devote their efforts.

"I've been telling ma," said Miss Eunice, "that I think we had better labor for the cause of foreign missions. I heard Mr. Simpson, while I was at Cousin John's. I was so much delighted with his farewell sermon; he preached it in several places, and I heard it in Saratoga, just before they left for the heathen land. His third wife, Miss Stillman, was a particular friend of mine; he had printed copies of the sermon for sale, and I bought one on her account. Some parts of it were very eloquent indeed." And taking up the pamphlet she read aloud: —

"We are possessed of a common origin, and a common

inheritance; sent into this breathing world to work out a common destiny. Then why should we limit the exercise of our Christian charities and our active sympathies, to the circumscribed limit of our own neighborhood or county, instead of encompassing in its encircling vastness the great human family of man."

"I'm very sorry he did not come here," said Mrs. Smith, "we could not possibly work for a worthier object; and to show that we aint narrow minded in our views. What do you think about it, Miss Squares?"

"I should be very sorry to be in the way of any good work, but we should be careful not to overlook the duty that lies nearest us; and I was intending to suggest that we give some assistance to Mrs. Elmer, who is quite sick; and both her children and herself are in great need of assistance."

"Aint you mistaken about that?" said Mrs. Ludlow; "I guess there aint anything serious the matter there, you can't believe half you hear now-a-days, the world is so wicked."

"I am sure I'm not mistaken, for I called there this afternoon, and found her quite sick of a fever," replied Mrs. Squires.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Smith, "then how do we know but you have exposed us all to some terrible disease. If you was anybody but Miss Squares, and the chief one of the directorers of the society, I should say you'd done a dretful unprudent thing a going there."

"I think they had better be sent to the poor-house right off, there's no knowing but what it's the scarlet fever she has got, and they always have that at the poor-house,

so she could not do any hurt by spreading it there," said Mrs. Brown.

"Why didn't you advise the woman that owns the house to turn her right out," said Mrs. Sharpe; "the rent will be more uncertain than ever if she is sick, besides, it's never safe to keep sick folks in a house, poor folks in particular, she might die there, and make it harder to rent the rooms afterward."

"Yes," said Mrs. Smith; "we are all taxed enough to support idleness and poverty there, and I have always thought they would come to it yet."

Mrs. Squires improved the first pause in the excited clamor, to explain to the ladies that the sickness which Mrs. Elmer suffered from need not cause them such alarm, as it was only a low fever, induced by constant toil and privation; and that with a little assistance and rest, she might soon be able to return to her employment; for she knew Mrs. Elmer better than to believe she would willingly be a burden to her friends.

"I don't see anything to hinder her resting at the county-house," said Miss Eunice, "I think she ought to be grateful that she lives in a Christian land, where a place is erected and maintained for the indigent."

"But," continued Mrs. Squires, "would it not be cruel to subject a person like Mrs. Elmer, whose only crime is that of honest poverty, to the odium of being classed among paupers, at a county poor-house? It does not seem Christian, to me, for us, as an Aid Society in a respectable church, to suffer it. I should not, perhaps, express myself so fully, but as President of the society, and for the credit of the organization, to say nothing of a higher motive, I think we ought to help her."

"I don't like to differ with a person like you," said Mrs. Ludlow, "but the sentiments you have just expressed wound my feelings; they remind me painfully of the awful doctrines that Mrs. Lee teaches those that come under her influence. Don't you remember the Bible teaches us 'our own righteousness is filthy rags,' but if you and Mrs. Lee have got so blinded as to think your own works can save you, I don't see that you can do better than improve the opportunity, and leave the Society to a wider field of usefulness. If Mrs. Lee knows about 'em, and she ought to I'm sure, why then she must count this fever a special providence in her behalf."

"Let her try it as long as I have," said Mrs. Smith, "and I guess she'll get discouraged before she makes anything of them. But we are taking up the Society's time with all this miscellaneous talk, and I'm anxious to hear about Mr. and Miss Simpson."

"I shall be most happy to gratify your wishes," said Miss Eunice; "but in order to dispose of this question, I propose that we put it to vote. Those, therefore, who are in favor of assisting our far distant friends in their laudable and honorable undertaking of carrying the Christian light of the gospel into heathenism's darkest recess, will make their wishes manifest by standing up; or by rising to express so praiseworthy a desire; while those who are willing to have their time appropriated for the benefit of a certain obscure family, who seem to be in great favor in certain quarters nearer home, may sit still."

"Almost unanimous," said Eunice, as she glanced triumphantly about the room, and saw every one upon their feet except Mrs. Bingham and Mrs. Squires.

"Now please to continue," said Mrs. Smith.

"Well, I was just saying, or rather I was about to remark, Mrs. Simpson was a particular friend of mine, and I thought we ought to feel it a privilege to avail ourselves of such an opportunity to assist in the great cause. The people in Gambletown made several suits of clothing to be sent to little namesakes of theirs in Muffletegawny, that was the name of the station; and I don't think we could do better than to follow their example. It's not a new idea to me, and I have an embroidered handkerchief, nearly finished, which I intend to mark in full, 'Eunice Ludlow, of Saratoga;' you see it would be my name and Cousin John's little girl's name too, and would be killing two birds with one stone, you know."

"I hope Miss Simpson will teach 'em better than to throw stones at birds, particularly out of such a nice handkerchief as that," said Mrs. Sharpe.

Mrs. Bingham, who had been a silent listener, could scarcely repress her indignation, and her sense of wrong, and ventured to repeat the old-fashioned maxim, that "Charity begins at home," and to mention again the claims of Mrs. Elmer; when Mrs. Smith, feeling very sensitive about the family, and sustained, as she thought, by the popular vote, took occasion to express herself more fully in regard to them.

"I don't want to prejudice nobody, but I've tried to help that family, if anybody ever tried to endeavor to do anything, and I don't mean to let their ingratitude and unthankfulness affect me, but then it's very trying."

"Ingratitude is very hard to bear," exclaimed Mrs. Ludlow.

"But it does not lessen our obligations to be charitable.

The commands and the promises nowhere put in the gratitude of the recipient of favor as a condition of our charity. We never find 'He that giveth to the grateful poor, lendeth to the Lord,' else we might lose the reward hereafter, by lowering our motives to the price of human praise and human gratitude," said Mrs. Bingham.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Smith, "but you can't say it aint discouraging to find the objects of our bounty proud and extravagant, besides being low and poor. I don't want to prejudice nobody, but facts is facts, and what I say is to be depended on. Everybody knows that family got along well enough before he went away, but the way she has managed since, just shows how much she knows. Miss Ludlow knows about it as well as I do, this big blue velvet chair is one of her extravagances; it looked just like new when she sold it here, and they just took it out of charity;" here Mrs. Smith ceased her violent rocking, and arose for the ladies to express their horror or their admiration, as their expressions were divided between the chair and its former owner.

"That's nothing at all compared to the pin that opened my eyes," continued Mrs. Smith. "After he had been gone a spell, and I heard how she was selling off her fineries, I knew she had a costly pin, and so I went over prepared to give her full as much as it was worth in old gold. But I wan't going to buy a cat in a bag, so I just give a good look at it. I knew it was genniwine, because he sent 't to her from Calaforny, and everything is genniwine that comes from there. But such a pin you never did see.

"On the front side of it there was a locket lid, and under it was George Elmer just as natural as life, only his face was peekeder than ever, and his beard longer. It looked

as though he had not shaved sence he went away. On the outside of the lid was some plain checkered work; but the inside of it beat everything. It was nothing more nor less than a young one with a night-gown on, and a pair of wings on its back. I could not see that it looked anything like their cubs only them everlastin' curls. I was glad they had modesty enough to put it inside. I shouldn't be willing to have one of my children taken in such a plight, it's bad enough to have them look like fury around every day. But the motto capped the climax. I copied it with my big gold pencil, it read '*a dieu pour vous*.' I did not ask her what it meant, for I did not want to condescend, but my niece translated it for me. It's French, and means 'ado for you.' I must say it's rather proper after all, for she made a fuss about him, after he had gone, and I s'pose he took this way to return the compliment, and make an ado for her. Of course such a pin would not do for a person of any taste, and so I did not even make her an offer for it."

"I've heard of that pin before, my husband offered to take it once, on some rent that she wanted to get out of paying; he managed to get an old clock and that was all. I guess she had rather stick to her finery, than to pay her honest debts," said Mrs. Sharpe.

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of Deacon Ludlow and Rev. Mr. Bingham, who had been invited to take tea with the ladies. Sam Ludlow soon made his appearance also. He was being got ready for school in a distant town, and this fact seemed to add so much to his social importance, that he was now expected to be introduced to company.

It did not however cause him to forget any of his old

tricks, for he invariably managed to say or do something to vex and mortify his sisters.

The conversation seemed to take a more religious turn upon the entrance of the minister. Mrs. Sharpe began to express her interest in a revival which was in successful progress in a neighboring town, and where two of her nieces had been hopefully converted.

"That's just what we want here," said Mrs. Smith. "I've been telling Mr. Smith I did so wish there was an opportunity for him to get religion."

"There was a wonderful awakening at Saratoga, while I was at Cousin John's. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson's visit caused a great deal of emotion there; perhaps you would like to look at his farewell sermon," said Eunice, handing Mr. Bingham her printed copy.

"Maybe the ladies would like to hear some of it read aloud," suggested Mrs. Ludlow.

"I should so," replied Mrs. Smith.

And Mr. Bingham read from the closing paragraphs: —

"We have now voluntarily banished ourselves from all the endearments, the attractions and refinements, of a home in civilized life. Turned our backs upon all these to become laboring exiles, in that far distant portion of the Lord's vineyard, to which we now pray the gales to waft us swiftly onward, though at the risk of a watery grave."

"I'm afraid very few of us would be willing to follow Miss Simpson's noble example, and leave all to follow the Lord!" exclaimed Eunice, with a patient sigh of unappreciated merit.

"That could be decided better if more missionaries come over after wives," said Sam, with a significant grin, "I rather guess there would be something of a scattering among the old maids."

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Sharpe exchanged smiles. Mrs. Squires directed her eyes more closely to her work. Mr. Bingham became silently interested in the sermon, and a pause ensued, until Mrs. Ludlow announced that "tea was ready."

On the Society book it was written that there should always be a plain tea, — "Biscuit and apple-sauce, and only one kind of cake." Some of the guests were therefore a little surprised, when, on taking seats at the table, they were served with soda biscuit, raised biscuit, buns, and strawberry shortcake, cider apple-sauce, crab-apple sauce, pineapple, and apple jelly. Then there were fruit cake, plain cake, and cookies.

Mrs. Sharpe thought they were liable to a fine, for breaking the rules of the Society. But Miss Eunice explained it very satisfactorily, — "You all see there's only biscuit and apple-sauce, and as for the cake, there is only one kind, the fruit cake is just like the other, only it has some raisins and a little citron stirred in, and the cookies are just the same dough with a little more flour, and a few caraways added."

Mrs. Smith said, that according to her ideas, it was breaking the rules in the right direction, and for her part she was willing to swallow the offence, as she helped herself to a large slice of fruit cake, laughing audibly at her own attempted wit.

Soon after tea Mr. and Mrs. Bingham expressed their desire to leave. Mr. Bingham had promised to make a sick call, and Mrs. Bingham was to go to see Mrs. Lee, whom she had not seen in a long time, and her husband was to join her at Mrs. Lee's, to return home.

There was an immediate lengthening of faces as Mr.

Bingham spoke of going, and such a universal expression of interest in the welfare of Zion, and such a desire for a special effort expressed by several, that Mr. Bingham felt compelled to propose obtaining the assistance of Mr. Phillips, a noted revivalist, to help in the work, and it was decided that he should write immediately for the desired aid. Miss Eunice expressed her regret at the necessity of the sick call, and wished the visit to Mrs. Lee could be postponed, the company would regret so much to lose them so early in the evening.

"Better have 'em find out who that chap at Mrs. Lee's is," said Sam, with his usual significant leer at Eunice. No one replied. Mr. Bingham was called upon to address the Throne of Grace, and made a short but earnest prayer, when Mr. and Mrs. Bingham bade the company good night. As soon as they were out of hearing, Sam said "That was a pretty good oration to the Lord." And on being reproved for his irreverence, very gravely asked his mother to explain the difference between an "oration to the Lord," and an "address to the Throne of Grace." You see I am going to school and I want to understand these things."

CHAPTER XII.

AT Mrs. Lee's, Mr. Bingham found Dr. Charles Lee, the person to whom Sam Ludlow had reference. He is a nephew of the late Dr. Lee, and has stopped to pay a visit on his return from California. It is not his first visit to our little town; years before he had come hither with the intention of studying medicine with his uncle. The intention, however, had been hastily overruled by the sad dispensation, with which our story begins, and after his uncle's lamented death he had completed his course in a neighboring city, and subsequently practised in San Francisco, where his earnest efforts had been rewarded by the esteem and confidence of a large and thriving practice, as well as by those more material returns which the world counts as the criterion of success.

The relation of Dr. Lee's pleasant adventures, assisted no doubt by her own determination not to dwell upon sad or painful memories during his visit, had already told favorably upon Mrs. Lee's health, and nearly every pleasant day found them riding or walking out in company.

On one of these occasions, as they were passing the residence of the Smiths, the attention of Dr. Lee was arrested by the dog Bounce lying near the gate, and walking more slowly and eying the dog with increased interest he said, "I declare, aunty, that dog looks like an old acquaintance."

His interest in the noble fellow increased as Bounce immediately jumped up and running up to them, placed his left foot immediately upon the Doctor's hand. "I really believe I have found an old patient said the Doctor."

"And so I am to infer that your practice extended to dogs," said Mrs. Lee, smiling at the rapid progress of their mutual recognition.

"I don't hesitate to own it did to this fellow," replied the Doctor examining a well-defined scar on Bounce's still extended foot. "I think there's no mistake; this is poor Elmer's dog, and that scar shows the very spot where his foot was hurt while he was in the mines."

"Was it George Elmer?" asked Mrs. Lee, with interest, "the young man who went from this place?"

"I never knew where he was from, I think the name was George — the man was sick in the hospital, and had a pretty severe time with a prevailing fever."

"Yes, I believe he died of it, after a time; at least that was the report which was brought back here."

"Oh no, he did not die of the fever; he was very ill for a long time, but I remember distinctly that he recovered and went to work again."

"Did you ever see Smith, the shoemaker?"

"I don't know that I did; there were any number of Smiths there but I don't recollect having a particular acquaintance with any of them."

"Then you never knew what became of Elmer after his sickness?" said Mrs. Lee inquiringly.

"I think he was in the hospital when I left, and that was some months afterward."

Mrs. Lee was very much interested in what she had learned of the husband of her friend, and that very even-

ing availed herself of the opportunity, while her nephew was writing to his family, of going out to carry to Mrs. Elmer the intelligence which she was so happy to be the medium of conveying.

As she approached the house and was thinking how to give expression to the good news in store for her friend, little Mary, who had discovered her approach, ran out to meet her, exclaiming,

"How glad I am you have come! mamma has got a letter and it made her almost well, and my papa was alive all the time, and Mr. Smith told a naughty story; is it not wonderful?"

Mrs. Lee kissed the little girl in congratulation, and went into the house, where her tears of sympathy were soon mingled with the drops of joy that flowed freely down Susan's face as they spoke together words of gratitude to God for the blessed tidings which had been so long delayed.

We cannot furnish our readers a copy of the letter which gave Susan so much pleasure, for she had not that vulgar ambition of display which might have induced some to send it to the newspapers; nor did she circulate it about for neighborhood comment and criticism. Those, therefore, who wish to know more of George Elmer will be compelled to go with us on the long journey to California. And as it will only be fair to give our friends a parting call before taking leave of them for the long journey, we will stop at the meeting-house on the way.

The new lamps are now in constant use, for while we have been engaged in other matters, the revival has not only been fairly inaugurated but is going on with increased activity and zeal. And as it is the opinion of those most interested, that its prosperity is wholly owing to the efforts

of Rev. Mr. Phillips, some may wish a more formal introduction to this distinguished revivalist. He is a person rather above the medium height, with large hazel eyes which, but for a total lack of expression, might be called beautiful. His coal-black hair was parted in a fashion which showed no neglect from its owner; his manner is affable and conciliating, and his dress of glossy black broadcloth as faultless as the most fastidious tailor could devise. Some insinuating person has intimated that a sudden improvement in his personal appearance is closely connected with the recent death of his wife; and a facetious friend has hinted that even his hair has become several shades darker to match the new mourning suit; but of the truth of these hints we are not personally responsible, although certain it is, that his popularity has never suffered in consequence of the fact that Mr. Phillips is a widower.

His sermons, in the opinion of some, were mere platitudes, with a faint shadow of an idea clothed in one weak syllogism after another, but without force or pith, while his prayers were only a medley of threatened wrath to evil doers, a report of neighborhood gossip, and a dispensation of full and free salvation to the elect; but whatever of adverse criticism might be bestowed upon these efforts, there was a charm and sweetness in the melody of his voice to which not even the most hostile could listen without admiration. The sentiments which he made this heaven-bestowed talent the means of conveying, may be better learned from one of his favorite hymns, than from any words of ours, and we copy one of them from the printed sheets which were liberally distributed throughout the church: —

JESUS PAID IT ALL.

Nothing either great or small
Remains for me to do;
Jesus died and paid it all,
Yes, all the debt I owe.

CHORUS.

Jesus paid it all,
All the debt I owe,
Jesus died and paid it all,
Yes, all the debt I owe;
Jesus paid it, paid it, all.

When He from his lofty throne
Stooped down to do and die,
Everything was fully done,
Yes "Finished" was his cry.

CHORUS.

Weary, working, plodding one,
Oh, wherefore toil you so?
Cease your doing, all was done,
Ages long ago.

CHORUS.

Till to Jesus' work you cling,
Alone by simple faith;
"Doing" is a deadly thing,
Doing ends in death.

CHORUS.

Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus, feet;
Stand in him, in him alone,
Glorious and complete.

CHORUS.

We will leave the spiritual affairs of our friends to the pastoral care of their musical shepherd, while we make a hasty trip to California for the purpose of inquiring after

our friends at San Francisco. We shall not ask you to brave the perils by sea of a voyage around the Cape, nor the risks and hazards of a railroad trip, because we prefer the safer and more direct line of our own imagination.

It is true that Smith has left George Elmer very sick indeed, and the fever has long seemed to defy the physician's skill and the nurse's care. Before this calamity had overtaken him, however, he had, while yet the enthusiasm of a new enterprise lasted, accumulated a thousand dollars which he had confided to Smith's offered charge for the little family at home. Elmer was too ill at the time of the transaction to attend to any legal papers, and the worse sickness which followed had so impaired his memory that he had never even wondered why it was never heard from. He had lingered long, conscious only of the change from intense pain to a languid stupor, and when the violence of the disease had at last passed away, the wild expression of the eye and the strange incoherence of speech formed no uncertain indication of the sad havoc of disease.

Though his mental faculties had suffered much under the painful malady, yet as his strength returned, with it came back so much of George Elmer's former enterprise that he was soon able to apply himself to the practice of his old business of dentistry.

A little office had been provided in a part of the hospital for a former patient, and as such services were in great demand and George had always been a skilful workman, he was soon gaining a handsome remuneration; he never spoke of his family or friends, and was always quiet and reserved towards every one except the little children, who frequently came in to bring flowers or dainties to the pa-

tients, and on whom he bestowed the curious little devices, the manufacture of which occupied his leisure.

There was in the same ward with Elmer a man by the name of Goulding, who had been seriously injured by the blasting of a rock, and brought in some time after Elmer. For many weeks each failed to recognize the other as an old acquaintance and former partner; yet it was not very strange, for Goulding had supposed with many others that Elmer had died of the fever; and the effects of that fearful malady upon the memory of the latter, had prevented his recognizing any person except those who had been constantly with him.

It was a matter of surprise to Goulding that after a recognition had taken place, Elmer received with such indifference his accounts of the richness of the claims in which they owned a mutual interest; and not until one evening when Mrs. Goulding had come in as usual to spend an hour with her husband did Elmer appear fully to have recovered his former self. Goulding had asked his wife to sing for him, and as she finished the second stanza of that sweet little song entitled "Star of the Evening," noticing the strange effect the words seemed to have upon his friend, Goulding begged her to stop.

Elmer's face was pale with emotion, and his eyes dim with unshed tears, as he asked in a tremulous voice, "Where's my wife? Where's Susan, and why does not she come and sing the Shining Star to me?"

Some of the attendants were alarmed, and feared a relapse of the disease, but they soon learned that it was only the sweet, soothing power of music that had roused that hidden chain in which the thoughts of those he loved had so long been lulled, and he grew calmer as the recollection

of that far-away fireside, the worn and wasted form of the aged grandmother, the earnest but uncomplaining face of his wife, and the happy voices of his little children, seemed to come like a beacon of life and hope to the storm-bound, ocean-wrecked mariner. He soon indited the letter, of the safe arrival of which we have learned, and as he intends very soon to follow it, we will go back to find what preparations are being made for his return.

The news of the arrival of a letter from George Elmer soon spread through the town, where it shared with the sayings and doings of the new converts, among whom Sam Ludlow and J. P. Smith were prominent in being the principal topics of conversation.

Mr. J. Pixley Smith was among the first to call upon Mrs. Elmer to inquire the particulars of the letter; and as the facts in relation to the money, and also some allusions to the dog came to light, Smith's interest in the affair became decidedly personal, and he interrupted Mrs. Elmer before she had finished reading, by saying,

"I've been intending this long time to come in and explain matters to you. You know we have tried to share the burden of your children with you, and then we've kept the dog; dogs are great eaters, and it would eat you out of house and home to have such a voracious fellow as Bounce around; but if you want the critter, you can have him. Then as to money matters, you seemed so comfortable I thought it best to save what I had for you till a rainy day; but if you think you need any, I s'pose I must let you have some, though women folks in general squander it awfully."

Mrs. Elmer might perhaps have been overcome with indignation at this speech had not her heart been too full

of gladness at the thought of her husband's return, and she replied, "God has taken care of us so far, and he will not forsake us now. You can bring the money or leave it to settle with Mr. Elmer, for I am not anxious to have any transactions with you."

Mr. Smith felt very angry at the honest indignation which Mrs. Elmer had expressed, but as there was now no apparent benefit to be derived from delay, he immediately applied himself to collecting the amount.

He availed himself of the advantage which his conspicuousness in the late revival had given him, and as he was now counted among the "active brethren," and his wife directress in "The Muffletegawny Missionary Aid Society," the brilliant thought of circulating a subscription paper for the benefit of that popular institution, occurred to him, and wishing to show his liberality, his zeal, and his pecuniary ability in one bold stroke, he headed the list with a donation of one hundred dollars. It was soon increased by the addition of smaller sums, and in a short time he was able to hand over the thousand to Mrs. Elmer, beside leaving a comfortable sum for his own pocket.

The dog which had been pronounced "a nuisance," "a cuss," and "a filthy squadruped," at the Smith residence, was the subject of an excited "family scene" when Smith declared his intention to give it away. Mrs. Smith called him a cruel, hard-hearted monster to give away the only thing the children ever did care anything about. The girls pouted, and declared they wouldn't go to school; Ferdinand shut Bounce in the bedroom, and placing himself against the door, armed with his father's cane declared "he'd see if the old man dared to touch his dorg." Meantime Smith retreated to the back yard and waited till the

excitement was over, and then coaxing Bounce with a beef bone which he had picked up in the morning at a butcher's stall and had been carrying for that purpose all day, he led the dog in the direction of Mrs. Elmer's, where he was soon discovered by Johnnie, who had been some time watching for his appearance. He was soon joined by Mary to whom he had conveyed information of the important arrival.

There was a very joyful meeting between the little girl and her old friend who seemed to forget the ill usage he had received from the youthful Smiths so much as to make every demonstration of friendship to Johnnie and Georgie to whom she gave him the most flattering introduction. As the former annoyances were removed, Bounce became not only the friend and companion of the Elmers, but the favorite of the neighborhood, where his somewhat unusual history had made him an object of more than ordinary interest.

Mrs. Maddock was quite overcome with delight at the good fortune of the Elmers, although she declared it had all happened just as she had expected ever since she heard that dream.

Mrs. Lee improved the earliest opportunity which Harriet's visit afforded to investigate the affair of the mysterious disappearance of the note, and had succeeded in settling it with Deacon Ludlow by giving him a receipt in full on his paying the exact amount which had been inclosed in the letter. The deacon congratulated himself on being abundantly able to meet the demand, expressing at the same time his satisfaction that Sam was done sowing his wild oats and had "got religion" now, while it was evident that the thought of Sam's making any restitution

for the wrong he had done never once occurred to the deacon's mind. The teachers tell me Sam is doing first rate now, and I am glad we had that revival just in time to save him.

Those who wish to be informed of this young gentleman from his own words, can do so by reading a letter which has lately been received from him by John Sharpe, a son of Mrs. Elmer's former landlord.

DEAR JACK, — It's an awful long time since I heard from you. I was dreadful sorry you got shut up just as I came away, for I wanted to see you desperately. I'm sorry you want there to get religion when I did; I tell you it's the best investment I've made lately, for it helps a fellow along mightily. This is a first rate school; I can stay out as late as I please, and no questions asked, but if one of the chaps that hasn't got religion is caught away from his room after nine, he gets a walking ticket, — whew!

I tell you, Jack, we had a gay old examination. I got excused from my classes to practise my oration. I wrote on "Religious Forms," for I knew all the old dominies and deacons would be appointed judges, and the fellow that put in the most piety would get the prize. I took care to put in a good rouser about the "old dragon and the old seven hills." You see it's always safe to give popery a death blow; besides, denunciation suits my style of oratory.

It took like a molasses fly-trap, and I got a tremendous big Bible for the first prize. I sold it for four fifty, and our society, the L. A.'s had a gay old spree on that, you may bet. We have a uniform here for parade days and such like. It's a grand arrangement, for we wear the old things that the others leave, and then the money answers lots of purposes.

There's an Episcopal society here; they've got a real nice

meeting-house, and a very polite chap for a minister. They are ever so popular, and I had quite a notion of joining them, but the fellow has taken a pious turn of late and begins to talk about self-denial and alms deeds in a way that I don't relish. I like the notion of every-day piety; that means something you can always make useful. Now's the present time, and a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. This going without your beef-steak and sticking to codfish and mackerel six weeks in March is what I call a scaly performance. I wish you would write as soon as possible and tell me how all the folks are getting along. I wonder if Eunice will make out to catch Mr. Phillips. I'm glad you kept dark about that old Elmer affair. I have never felt just right about it; I knew the old man would fork over if I only got religion. After all it was not a mighty sight meaner than his buying her chairs for less than half they were worth, because he knew she was obliged to sell them. If ever I make a lift again, it will be on an Express Office or a bank; there's something mean in robbing a poor widow, but then if I get as much saving faith as the old man has, I shan't be so scrupulous. I am going into the storage and foraging business as soon as I get through here, and if that don't pay I may come back and marry Mary Elmer, by way of righting old scores; that is if Elmer really brings back the dust.

Yours forever,

SAM LUDLOW.

P.S. Please direct your letter to Miss Sarah Loomis care of S. Ludlow Esq. You see we are expected to have our letters sent to the care of the professors, who take pains to read them for us, and I want to save them that trouble.

Yours again,

S. L.

On receiving the sums of money from Mrs. Lee and

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Elmer's first care was to secure for herself and family a home, where they and her expected husband would be more comfortable. And although their present prosperity, as indicated in George's letter, might warrant them in selecting some more aspiring locality, it was Susan's highest ambition to return to the little cottage where they had first started housekeeping, and from which George had gone forth on his journey.

Here the pleasures of their early wedded years had been crowned with joy, by the birth of their first-born child, the darling Mary; and here Johnnie had received a father's smile of welcome, and a mother's kiss of love, as he added new happiness to a home which had been already full of light and gladness. And in later years, when the rough winds of adversity seemed untempered to the shorn lambs, and the dark, hard hand of poverty seemed ready to crush them, had little Georgie brought the smiles of infant innocence to cheer once more the desolate home, and to prevent the thoughts of his mother from flowing always in the same dark channel.

Here, too, had been learned many a lesson of trusting hope, and patient, quiet submission, from the example of that aged mother, whose memory was still embalmed in the sighs, and dewed with the tears of affectionate remembrance.

The little cottage was soon engaged, and the few preparations for moving were quickly completed. Mrs. Maddock, with characteristic liberality, declared that it would be time enough for her to take the rest, when George Elmer was safe home again.

As Susan and the children were following their little stock of furniture to their new home, she was startled by

the sight of a carriage at the door, and quite excited at the thought that her husband had possibly preceded her there. Her surprise abated, however, when on entering the house she found her visitor to be Mrs. Bennet Squires, who had lately returned from an absence of several weeks.

It had been the surprise and horror of many of her neighbors, that she could think of going away just in the midst of the revival; and Mrs. Smith had even gone so far as publicly to propose her name as a subject for their prayers.

Certainly the religion of Mrs. Squires was very different from that of Mrs. Smith; for she was always ready to assist the poor by her sympathy and her bounty, without making a catalogue of their faults. While she gave to her equals or her superiors in worldly things, the offices of kindness, without taking the census of their virtues; she never made it her business to censure or find fault with her clergyman, even though his sermons contained doctrines and opinions quite at variance with her own. Nor did she sneer at, or find fault with those persons who thought they found aids to piety and excellence in things which to her judgment appeared only the excitement of passion, or the sway of popular public sentiment; ever showing a commendable respect for honest differences of opinion and of belief.

The object of the present visit added another to the many kindnesses with which she had made glad the home of the Elmers; for she had come to place in its old corner the little clock, of whose existence she had first heard at the society at Deacon Ludlow's. She had been anxious to give to Susan some token of the pleasure she felt at the new turn of events, and could not have found a more welcome expression of her kindness.

Many other pieces of furniture found their way back; the blue velvet rocking-chair soon took its accustomed commanding position in the little front parlor, and really looks almost as bright as before its stay at the Deacon's, where the hospitality had never been such as to tell unfavorably upon the parlor furniture. Susan was very glad to get the chair again; it had been one of her few wedding presents, and was the gift of a liberal and wealthy friend, in New York City.

Deacon Ludlow had shown considerable reluctance at Mrs. Elmer's request to repurchase the chair. "I—I—I s'pose you know I never offered my furniture for sale, Miss Elmer," he said; but Susan distinctly remembered the well-feigned reluctance with which he had paid her the paltry sum of six dollars for it. She could almost hear his words again, as he said, "'Taint everybody that would want to buy an odd piece of furniture like that, and you will find it pretty heavy to carry round, if you try to sell it that way."

Remembering these things as Susan did, she gained courage to urge her request, which the Deacon hesitatingly acknowledged.

"I don't know, but being it's you, I shall hev to let you take it for ten dollars; 'taint a circumstance to what it's worth; besides you see furniture is riz."

Susan had just got comfortably settled, when George returned. We shall not intrude upon the pleasure of their first meeting; but several weeks have now passed, since the scattered members of the loving household were reunited, and though tender and mournful remembrances of the past mingle with the pleasures of the present hour, and give them a subdued and chastened coloring, theirs

is a quiet happiness which glittering splendor and dashing grandeur might covet in vain.

George Elmer sits beside the work-table, reading the last number of the Dental Journal, while Susan sits near, plying her needle as in days of old. Georgie is asleep, and Johnnie is at play building a miniature village. Jerusha sits in a retired corner, where Mary is assisting her to learn her lesson for the Bible class. She is still living at Mrs. Lee's, and frequently comes over to visit her early friend. Bounce lies upon a comfortable rug beside the stove, looking contented and happy, in spite of all the trials and changes through which he had passed, and watching his master's eyes whenever they turn, while with an instinct almost human, he makes his master's welcome understood.

When George Elmer had finished reading the paper, he folded it carefully, and laying it upon the table turned to Susan, and in a tone which brought a smile of recognition upon Mary's face, said, —

"Come, Susy, sing The Shining Star."

And soon that cheerful room echoed with the well-remembered words, as they all united in the chorus, —

Look up, my soul, be like the lark,
That singing soars afar,
There's not a cloud, however dark,
But veils a shining star.

LETTERS FROM TIMBERVILLE.

LETTERS FROM TIMBERVILLE.

I.

I HAVE been a full year at Timberville, and have never yet told you a word about it. And as you know nothing concerning it, excepting that it does not lie on the direct route to anywhere, but off on one side by itself, I'll be bound but you think it a little bit of a quiet, unimportant village, made up of a tavern, a store, a *meeting-house*, a blacksmith's shop, and a few straggling dwelling houses. How mistaken you are. Timberville is a large village — a very large village. I should not wonder if we should be a city in a few years; for we are a very enterprising people, and there is a deal of business done here. We have ever so many streets, and any quantity of tall, white houses, belonging to no particular order of architecture, but invariably graced with piazzas, adorned with four huge columns. We have, also, plenty of red brick mansions with a great many green window blinds; and also, now and then, a handsome stone dwelling. And, like all populous and thriving villages, we have our complement of forlorn, shabby, rickety old shells, stuffed full of beings as forlorn and shabby as themselves. Poverty, vice, and intemperance abound here. No doubt we shall be a city in a few years.

Timberville is delightfully situated on both sides of a beautiful little stream, (or, as our enterprising villagers say, *it has fine mill privileges,*) and surrounded by tree-clad hills. I am never weary looking at our hills, beautiful at all times, but particularly so in the autumn, when they are arrayed in a robe of every variety of color, from the most gorgeous crimson to the softest ash. "What beautiful hills!" said I, enthusiastically, as I was one day walking with a worthy gentleman. "Yes — yes — fine timberland," said he.

Our society is very much like the society in all growing villages. We have good people and bad people; rich people and poor people; wise people and ignorant people; liberal people and stingy people; sharp people and dull people; *cute* people and *numb* people; industrious people and lazy people. People who mind their own business and people who mind their neighbors' business. Honest people and dishonest people; literary people and illiterate people, and *soi disant* literary people (excuse that French word.) We have gay people and serious people; noisy people and quiet people; people who go to church and people who stay away from church. We have temperate people and intemperate people. People who read the newspaper, and people who have "other fish to fry." People who *take* "*Godey*," and people who *borrow* "*Godey*." We shall certainly be a city before many years.

We have all sorts of societies, too. Missionary societies, Bible societies, tract societies, sewing societies, maternal societies, mutual improvement societies, sons of temperance and daughters of temperance societies, odd fellows' societies, and an odd ladies' society, composed

chiefly of ancient maidens. We have freemasons' societies, literary societies, woman's rights societies, anti-everything societies, benevolent societies for all sorts of objects, "too numerous to mention," (as the menagerie bills say when they get down to the monkeys.) In short, we have every kind of society that you can possibly mention. Are we not in a fair way of being a city?

As is the case in almost all new *enterprising* villages, the chief distinction among us is that of "rich and poor." So soon as a man is able to put up, or even to hire, a large house with two parlors and folding-doors, and furnish it showily, he takes his standing among the *first*. The one grand object of the Timbervillians is to get rich. They are all agog just now about California. Mr. Martin, and Mr. Crandal, and Mr. Wiggins, have almost made up their minds to abandon their respective occupations and set off for the gold country; and their wives are quite delighted with the idea; for Mrs. Martin wants a great many things which Mr. Martin, rich as he is, cannot afford now. And Mrs. Crandal is very desirous that Mr. Crandal should go, in order that he may come back able to build a grander house than Mr. Martin's, with larger columns and more green blinds. She knows she's as good as Mrs. Martin, any day, and she'd like to let other people know it. And Mrs. Wiggins teases her husband from morning till night to "Go to Californy, where they say you've only to dig up the gold just as you would potaters;" for she *does* want a house of her own, and a *sofy* and some *curtings* as good as that *stuck*-up Mrs. Crandal's; and she fears that Mr. Wiggins will never be able to get them as long as he stays here and delves away at his trade. "Gold! gold! gold!" is the cry from every mouth, old and young. Oh, we shall soon be a city.

I would like to introduce you to some of our *first*, and let you see in what sort of society I have the honor to mingle. Now do not suppose that I have procured the ability to present you among the "upper ten," by one of the aforesaid tall houses with big parlors and folding-doors; by no means; I am only a boarder in Timberville. But where shall we go? — to a party? Now, pray, don't turn up your nose at the idea of a party in Timberville. I assure you, we have our parties, real genuine ones, too, as good as any in Philadelphia — assemble at ten o'clock — have supper at twelve or one — dance all night, and "don't go home till morning" — for the Timbervillians would think it very ungenteel and countrified to keep reasonable hours. We *must* be a city very soon.

But, on reflection, I think I'll not take you to a party — they are too promiscuous. Nor will I bore you with a sociable tea-drinking — decidedly one of the most tiresome things in the world, the world over. And in Timberville they are just what they are everywhere else, (making allowance for some few local peculiarities.) The ladies collecting in little knots; some talking scandal, some more innocently discussing the fashions, but by far the greater portion descanting upon the various trials and troubles they have with their "helps;" while the very small sprinkling of the sterner sex — who never talk at such gatherings, and who go only because their wives insist upon it — are leaning back in their chairs against the wall, half asleep, and heartily wishing themselves at home, or in some place more congenial with their tastes.

Suppose you go with me to one of our numerous societies. Don't be alarmed; it's not to the "odd ladies," nor the "daughters of temperance," nor the "woman's rights

society," that we are going. I am not a member of any of them. But put on your fix-ups, and prepare to accompany me to the "Timberville literary circle," where you will be sure to meet the *élite* (another French word — pardon me — perhaps, however, you do not dislike to see French and English mixed together as badly as I do). We are to meet this very evening at the hospitable mansion of Mrs. Bolton, a very literary lady; but you shall see for yourself — I'll not anticipate. Stop a moment; I must put "Godey" in my pocket. Not the veritable individual himself. If his own account is to be trusted, that would be rather more than I could do. But my "Godey's Lady's Book" for the month. I am one of the readers for this evening, and I find, by experience, that I am not half as welcome when I come armed and equipped with an original article as when I bring my "Godey."

So here we go; and as we are on our way, I will tell you something about our "circle," and how I, little *I*, came to be a member of so august a body. It was on this wise. The good people discovered that I *took the newspapers;* not a very common thing in Timberville, where it is usually as much as the inhabitants can "afford" to take some one of the village papers, of which we have three — organs of the three political parties of the place — and which blaze away at each other with a zeal worthy the cause, and in a style equal to any of the city organs. Young Mr. Morgan, the head clerk at the post-office, was the first person who promulgated the important fact. He told Miss Carpenter, and Miss Carpenter, who is a member of the literary circle, announced, at the next meeting of that society, that there was a lady boarding at Mrs. Pratt's who took no less than *four papers;* Mr. Morgan told her so

himself; and she was sure I must be of a decidedly literary turn. In fact, she had her suspicions that I was the authoress of certain sonnets signed "Euphrasia," which had been copied into the "Timberville Weekly Gazette and People's Advocate.' If so, I would be quite an acquisition to the "circle." (Miss Carpenter herself perpetrates poetry, and is considered quite *blue*.) The other members thought that if I was not a literary character, I must at least be *rich*, or I could not afford to take so many papers, notwithstanding I seemed to be living in such a plain, private way. In either case, they decided that it would be safe to invite me to attend the circle.

In pursuance of this resolution, I was waited upon by Miss Carpenter and Mrs. Stokes, and favored with a very learned conversation, kept up principally by Miss Carpenter. Mrs. Stokes is not particularly literary — she owes her membership to her very large parlors and great skill in getting up a variety of refreshments.

On rising to take leave, the ladies (as is the custom in Timberville) apologized most vehemently for not having called before, and urged me very strongly to return their visit very soon; and Mrs. Stokes, after Miss Carpenter had winked hard at her several times, to indicate that she was the proper person to perform the office, invited me to attend a literary *sawree* at her residence on the ensuing evening. Which Miss Carpenter followed up with the remark that she hoped I might find it "a desirable relief from the undiversified monotony of a boarding life." Or it might, as in her own case, "afford a relaxation to the mind after severer application and more profound occupation, to indulge for a time in the perusal of the lighter literature of the day."

I attended the sawree, (as Mrs. Stokes called it,) and being soon after elected a member, have been quite regular in my attendance since. And I assure you it is, as Miss Carpenter predicted, a relief to my mind and an amusement to my head, to come in contact with the variety of characters which I there meet.

But here we are. Sit down beside me on this sofa; the members are not all here yet, and we shall have a little time to chat before we are called to order.

That short, dumpy lady, who is bobbing about in a very stiff silk dress flounced nearly to the waist, is our hostess, Mrs. Bolton. She is a great patroness of literature, and herself a personage of remarkable erudition, and excessively fond of reading. As she expresses it, she *literarily* devours her favorite authors. It must be confessed that she knows the *names* of a good many authors, and a good many books, though she does not always *match* them quite correctly. She thinks that Dean Swift has some genius; his "Rasselas" is a proof of it; but it is a great pity that he ever wrote so vulgar a book as "Don Quixote." She says that Byron's "Deserted Village" interests her sympathies exceedingly, although the majority of critics pronounce his "John Gilpin" his master-piece. She has a perfect passion for Milton's "Tasso" and "Dante," and actually dotes on his "Lady of the Lake."

Such being her acquirements, she, of course, is very capable of discovering and appreciating literary qualifications in others. She delights in drawing modest merit from obscurity, and in giving bashful genius a *boost*. It is through her instrumentality that Mr. Boors, the alarmed young man who sits in the corner staring so hard at vacancy, and Miss Quince, the young lady with a projecting

forehead and long ringlets, who is bending over the table as completely absorbed in a volume of Mrs. Hemans, as if it was the first time she had seen the work, have been introduced to the notice of the Timberville literati. These two individuals are great admirers of Mrs. Bolton, who protests that Mr. Boors is a very intellectual young man, and that Miss Quince has a great deal of talent. Neither of them has as yet made any display of ability; for Mr. Boors invariably sits all the evening just as he is now, and Miss Quince never speaks excepting in monosyllables. Probably they both, like the celebrated owl, keep up a tremendous thinking.

The tall lady, with a very long neck and little waist, is Miss Carpenter, our cerulean sonnet writer.

The pretty girl with a white rose in her hair, is Miss Carrol, the sweetest singer in Timberville. She is a belle, and a wit withal. There is a lawlessness about her which would hardly be tolerated in any one but a beauty and a belle. And yet I like the girl for her truthfulness. The would-be-dignified gentleman who sits beside her, is Mr. Griffin, her warmest admirer and most especial butt. He is a critic; a very severe one, too. He is never satisfied with anything produced in the circle. Indeed, I believe there is but one composition in the world that he admires without qualification, and that is Poe's "Raven." He never writes for us; but he is so very fastidious that, of course, we all think he *can* do wonders if he will but condescend. And Miss Carrol is constantly teasing him to favor us with something *ravenous*.

Those two gentlemen conversing together are rival editors. The short, fat one, he who has what a facetious friend of mine calls a *vegetable countenance*, i. e., *turn-up*

nose, *reddish* complexion, and carroty whiskers, is the celebrated individual whose voice, thundering through the columns of the "Timberville Herald of Liberty and Freeman's Journal," makes monarchs tremble, thrones totter, and Old Hunkers shake in their shoes. His tall, thin neighbor occupies the chair editorial of the "Timberville Weekly Gazette and People's Advocate." (Our papers, like our people, all have double names.) How delightful to see the urbanity with which they can meet. It seems hardly possible that they have just been tearing each other to pieces at such a terrible rate, "through the medium of the press."

The gentleman who is just entering the room, with a linen roundabout, and his pants tucked inside of his boots, is Mr. Bolton, the *worser* half of our hostess, and a horse-dealer by profession. He couldn't spend time to change his dress; it was as much as he could do to come in at all. It is true that Mrs. Bolton, who is not very proud of her unintellectual spouse, has repeatedly assured him that there was no necessity for his coming in this evening; he needn't trouble himself, &c., &c. Still, Mr. Bolton, who is a kind-hearted man, thought he would just come in long enough to say how d'ye do, and let his neighbors know that he was glad to see them at his house. Poor Mrs. Bolton! she looks perfectly *consterned* at his appearance. Her countenance says very plainly, "Won't he catch it for coming to the *sawree* in such a fix! He might, at least, have put on his best clothes." But he seems wholly unconscious of her fiery glances, as he makes for a chair, and poising himself miraculously on one of its legs, begins to descant to Mr. Martin on the excellence of "them hosses he sold Snyder."

The tall, pale youth, with huge whiskers, who stands gracefully leaning on the mantel, is Mr. Fustian, a serenader by profession; at least, I have never heard of his doing anything else. He has great powers of endurance; for, I am told, that he thinks nothing of standing two hours, of a cold night, under Miss Carrol's window, *executing* music. Miss Carrol *thinks nothing* of it, too. She declares that she sleeps through it all.

Those two somewhat antiquated *young ladies*, with low necks and bare arms, whom he is entertaining, or, rather, who are entertaining him, are the sisters Caroline and Lucy Bigelow; or, as they call each other, "Carry and Lute." They affect great juvenility, though nobody remembers when they were young, and are fond of talking about "us girls." They have a Brother Peter somewhere in New England, who, according to their account, is enormously wealthy, and lives in princely style. "Brother Peter's establishment" is the constant and almost only theme of their conversation. "Brother Peter's garden;" "Brother Peter's conservatory;" "Brother Peter's library;" in short, everything at Brother Peter's is on so magnificent a scale, that "Carry" and "Lute" can never see anything that suits them anywhere else. Even Mrs. Bolton, who admires their taste and refinement exceedingly, thinks they have almost too much "fastidium." They occasionally write, and their articles are always descriptive of something at "Brother Peter's."

That tall brunette, in black, is Miss Mary Willis. I never made up my mind that she was handsome, until she adopted the "French twist," and really looked well in it; for, certainly, it must be a handsome face that can stand the test of a coiffure so universally unbecoming. She is a

very quiet, retiring girl. Many persons think her proud, but I do not, and I think that I have penetrated her character quite thoroughly. If Mary Willis is proud, I could wish that such pride were contagious.

The thin, *peaked*-looking woman, to whom Mary is talking, is Mrs. Stokes. She is a very *nice* woman — as the Timbervillians say. She does not look as if she partook very largely of the good things which she knows how to prepare in such perfection, and with which she is always cramming her friends. As I before remarked, she makes no pretensions to literary merit herself, but she is a great admirer of it in others, and praises, indiscriminately, everything that is produced or read in the circle. She pronounces all the prose articles "first-rate," and all the poetry "sublime." Mrs. Bolton has not a very high opinion of Mrs. Stokes, but hopes that the "sawrees will be an advantage to her intelleck."

But my letter is already unreasonably long. If you are at all interested in our society, perhaps I may be able in my next to give you some specimens of our productions. And I can scarcely entertain a doubt that you will henceforth be interested in the sayings and doings of Timberville, since you know that *we* are a very important people, and shall undoubtedly be a city in a few years.

II.

TIMBERVILLE.

I AM getting tired of boarding — there are so many annoyances connected with it generally. And even in the best-regulated boarding-houses there is a lack of that pleasant home-feeling which one has in housekeeping, even though it be in a hired house. If we were determined to "locate" (as the Timbervillians say) permanently in this place, we should have a home of our own. Until that point is decided, we shall remain with Mrs. Pratt, for I would rather endure a great many inconveniences than to be changing about. I have often been amused at the frivolous causes which drive some persons from one boarding-house to another. I know one gentleman who never stays above a month, and seldom as long as that, at the same house. At one place he had to drink milk in his tea; he hadn't been used to it, and wouldn't put up with it. At another, his nose was often offended at the odor of boiled cabbage; he didn't like cabbage, and he wouldn't stand it.

Mrs. Pratt's establishment is conducted on the most economical scale. She understands to perfection the art of making much of a little. She knows how to "stretch out," and make a very small quantity "go a great ways." She is a widow of some years' standing, but has not yet ceased to grieve for her worthy husband. She is forever

expatiating on his perfections. To hear her talk of him, you would suppose that all the virtues as well as talents that were ever created, were united in the person of "poor Mr. Pratt." The grand object of her life seems to be to marry off her two daughters, Ann Maria and Philura, a brace of young ladies who expend upon their fair persons the products of their mother's thrift, and who appear to serve no other purpose in the establishment than that of entertaining the young gentlemen boarders. They never make their appearance at breakfast, but at dinner they burst upon us in all their glory, looking as if they had spent the whole morning at the toilet. They are rather pretty girls, and with the exercise of a tolerable taste in dress, would look very well; but they are always arrayed in showy frocks, gaudy sashes, flaring neck-ribbons, and, to crown all, some sort of trumpery head-dresses, and all of different colors, so that it really makes my eyes ache to look at them. The head-dresses, above all, are my especial abomination. I can scarcely keep my fingers off them, they make me so nervous. But they are young ladies to whom it would not be safe for a plain person like me to offer a suggestion on the subject of dress. They take but little notice of me, and make no efforts to render my abode with them pleasant, but reserve all their attentions for the young men, who always find them "very easy to get acquainted with." That part of their time which is not devoted to dressing, calling and shopping, is spent in drumming the piano, on which they do great *execution*, and in embroidering slippers or netting purses for the gentlemen.

There are, at present, six single gentlemen boarding in Mrs. Pratt's family — Mr. Wilkins, a rich old widower, very cross and very asthmatic, — an object of tender solic-

itude to Ann Maria, who takes a vast deal of pains to make him comfortable, though he does not appear to appreciate it; Mr. Stivers and Mr. Green, a couple of merchants' clerks, with nothing remarkable about them excepting standing collars so stiff that they cannot turn their heads without turning their bodies also; Mr. Hocum, a lumberman, who minds his own business and never says anything; Mr. Bunker, a sort of "Jack at all trades," a dealer in everything, an inventor of a great variety of useless articles, for which he gets patents — he also fills the office of *reporter* to the neighborhood, and brings home every day all the scandal and gossip afloat in the village; and Monsieur Laborde, a French teacher, full of whims and oddities, such as rolling his hair in papers over night to make them curl; exercising his lungs out of his window, to the great alarm of passers-by; cooking all sorts of ridiculous messes on the top of the parlor stove; wearing a great many brown paper soles in his slippers, and spreading them out on the rug every evening to dry, — and a hundred other peculiarities.

Besides the two daughters, Mrs. Pratt has also a son, a boy of some twelve years old, who, for want of proper training, had grown to be, when we first came here, a complete little nuisance. His sisters considered him a plague and a torment; and his mother declared, with a rueful shake of the head, that she didn't know what she should do with Joe, he had got to be so unmanageable — no comfort to her at all, so different from what his poor father was. These lamentations, which were usually delivered in the boy's presence, did not contribute materially to his improvement. In fact, he was universally disliked. The boarders were unanimous in the opinion that he was

destitute of one single redeeming quality. He played all sorts of tricks upon them, and they never passed him without a kick or an oath. Particularly obnoxious was he to Monsieur Laborde, who pronounced him "one leetle diable."

When we came to Mrs. Pratt's we heard so much about Joe's precocious wickedness that we almost feared to be under the same roof with him. One morning, a few days after our arrival, as we were going through the hall to breakfast, Monsieur rushed from his room just ahead of us, and with a ferocious aspect, hurried down the stairs. On his way, he encountered Nancy, the chambermaid, going up to "regulate."

"Nancie," said he, showing her something in the palm of his hand, "what you call dis?"

"That," said Nancy, who has a spice of the wag in her — "oh, that's a *pickaxe*."

"Peek-axe," said the Frenchman, throwing it down; and, as he proceeded, he kept repeating — "peek-axe, peek-axe," so as to impress it firmly upon his memory. When he reached the breakfast-room, where the rest of the boarders were assembled, and Mrs. Pratt, at the head of the table, was just beginning to make the coffee, he bounced in, and without any of his usual French fuss, shouted — "Madame Pratt, I have suffer one grand insult! Peek-axe! Sho have insult me in ma chambre. Peek-axe! It is one miserable shild, dat Sho."

"The dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Pratt, "what *shall* I do with that boy? He'll be the death of me yet. What *has* he been doing now?"

"He have insult me ver bad," continued Monsieur. "It is one leetle diable. If I could keel him, I would be satisfait."

"That I should live to see the day!" groaned Mrs. Pratt. "Pray, what has he done, Mr. Laborde? I'll punish —"

"What have he done?" said the Frenchman. "He have done plentie, te miserable — he have trow more as five hondred peek-axe in te window of ma chambre. While I shave ma barbe, I understand a noise by the window; one moment apres, I am couvert de peek-axe."

"Pickaxes!" exclaimed the distressed mother. "Forever and ever! What would poor Mr. Pratt say?"

"Pickaxes!" cried the gentlemen. "Impossible! It can't be so!"

"Do you not believe that I say?" demanded Monsieur, gesticulating violently. "Well, den, come to ma chambre, and you shall see."

So we all, excepting Mrs. Pratt, whose feelings would not allow her to move, followed Monsieur to his room, where we found Nancy, with a dust-pan and wing, busily engaged in brushing up a quantity of small shot, with which Joe had besieged the French fortress.

"There," said *parlez-vouz*, "you can see for yourselve; peek-axe, plentie peek-axe."

The boarders raised a tremendous roar at Monsieur's expense, in the midst of which Nancy made a rapid exit. The Frenchman was furiously angry at being laughed at, and fearing that something serious might come of it, I retreated to my own quarters. I believe that only two or three of the boarders returned to the table, so that Mrs. Pratt saved a good part of the breakfast to *warm up* the next morning.

After this performance, my husband proposed seeking another boarding-house, as there was no telling how soon

Master Joe might begin to play off his pranks upon us. But I objected to removing, and begged him to leave me to manage Joe. To tell the truth, I had a sort of sympathy for the child, to which, perhaps, certain recollections of my own juvenile experience contributed in some degree. Be that as it may, I felt a desire to know more of the unpopular boy, and to discover, if possible, whether there was any good in him.

A day or two after this affair, at the tea-table, Mr. Bunker pulled out of his pocket a dirty piece of paper, on which was scratched, in charcoal, a profile considerably resembling his own, which is distinguished by a very long nose and huge whiskers; and holding it up before Mrs. Pratt, exclaimed —

"Look o' there, ma'am! —that's Joe's work! I found it stuck up on my store, right in plain sight. If that boy ain't a fit subject for the House of Refuge, I don't know who is!"

"Forever and ever!" cried Mrs. Pratt. "That I should live to hear of his doing such a thing! What *is* that child a coming to, after all my faithfulness too! Why, I've wrestled in prayer for him hours together, and a'most whipped the skin off his back, and all for nothing! What would his poor father say?" &c.

While Mrs. Pratt was groaning and lamenting, the work of art was handed round, and elicited various comments from the beholders. The young ladies declared that, if they were Mr. Bunker, they wouldn't care a cent about it, for it didn't look a bit like him.

"I don't care a cent about it," said Bunker; "only I'd like to have the handling of that boy."

Monsieur, who was still smarting under the *pickaxes*,

pronounced it a "grand insult." But the other young men, always delighted at a chance to tease one another, thought it "a pretty fair likeness." "It's Bunker," said Mr. Stivers; "only *more so*." "Précisément," said Monsieur, beginning to relish the joke, and glad of an opportunity to laugh at Bunker. "Précisément — it is the nose of Mr. Bunker a leetle more long, and the whiskers of Mr. Bunker a leetle more big."

Bunker looked as if he wished he had not exhibited the likeness, since it had been the means of "getting the rig on him," as they call it here. But he was somewhat mollified by Mrs. Pratt's assurance that she should punish Joe severely.

In the evening, my room being very warm, I had thrown open the door, and sat meditating upon Joe and his performances, when I heard Mrs. Pratt in the dining-room dealing with that young gentleman in a most summary manner; scolding him at a terrible rate, and interspersing her lecture with frequent cuffs on the ears.

"You miserable young one!" said she. "You'll be the death of me yet, I know you will — (cuff) — you're all the time a doing something so awful wicked — (cuff.) What did you go and make Mr. Bunker's likeness for, say?" — (cuff.)

"'Cause he misused me," said Joe. "He don't treat me like a human being; and nobody else don't, neither."

"Well, you don't act like a human being," said his mother, with another cuff; "and you ought not to be treated like one. What did you want to draw that shameful profile for — say?" and she administered three successive cuffs.

"I tell you I did it because he misused me," said Joe.

"He knocked me off his store steps on to the ground, when I wasn't a doing anything."

"Yes — I'll warrant you wasn't a doing anything," said his mother; "you ain't never a doing anything, you good-for-nothing, lazy, idle little wretch! You'll never be nobody — you'll grow up a miserable vagabone! And what would your poor father say if he knew how you was a breaking my heart every day? — (Several cuffs.) So now, just take off your boots, and go 'long to bed; and if ever I hear of your drawing any more profiles, I'll give it to you about east!"

The scolding and the cuffs alike seemed to make no impression upon Joe. His ears were, doubtless, inured to both. As he was passing my door on the way to his own dormitory, I called him. He half paused, and was going on, when I called him again. He stopped, looked furtively over his shoulder, and said —

"I hain't done anything to you, have I?"

Without noticing his question, I repeated, "Come here, Joe, I want to show you something." He hesitated a moment, and then, reassured by my countenance, with a look of bewildered astonishment, advanced into the room. A new magazine, containing several fine engravings, was lying by me on the table. I opened it. "Joe," said I, "I believe you are fond of pictures; here are some good ones that I think you would like to look at." He came forward and looked at the plates; but it was some time before I succeeded, by talking about the engravings and pointing out their merits, in making him feel at ease. After he had recovered from his surprise, he became quite interested in the pictures, rubbed off his dirty fingers on his still dirtier trowsers, and began to turn over the leaves himself.

"This book," said he, "looks just like one that Mr. Green gave Philura; but the pictures are different. She wouldn't let me look at it, but I got hold of it once when they'd gone away, and looked at it ever so long, and she don't know it yet."

"Joe," said I, "you remind me of my nephew Johnny. You are just about his age and size. Johnny is very fond of pictures, and he draws them too. Do you ever draw pictures, Joe?"

"Me!" said Joe. "No, not good ones; I don't know how."

"Would you like to learn to draw?" said I.

"Gracious! I couldn't learn," said he.

"Why could you not learn?" I asked.

"O because I can't learn anything," replied the child, with a very decided look.

"Do you go to school?" I inquired.

"Not now," said Joe. "I've been to school; but the master turned me out because, he said, I couldn't learn anything if he should try to flog it into me till doomsday."

"But would you like to learn to draw if you could?" asked I.

"Yes, I would most plaguily," replied Joe. "I always thought I should like to."

I knew the boy's capacity, from the "charcoal sketch" of Bunker's head, which really possessed a good deal of character; quite as much as the original — so I said —

"I think you could learn, Joe. If you have a mind to try, I will teach you."

The child looked up suddenly, and after regarding me a moment with an expression of wonder, said, —

"Are you in earnest, Mrs. Waters?"

"Certainly," said I. "I used to like very much to teach Johnny, and I will be glad to teach you." I then took from a portfolio one of my drawings, and asked him if he would like to draw that. It was a rough sketch of some children and a dog. Joe was delighted with it; and said he would give anything to know how to make such a picture. I told him to come to my room every morning, and I would give him lessons.

"You will though?" said he. "O how I wish I could come — but I darsent — mother'll whale me if I do. She says I sha'nt go into the boarders' rooms at all."

"But if I invite you she'll not object, will she?"

"I don't know," said Joe, shaking his head, sorrowfully. "I guess she'd whale me anyhow; but no matter if she does — I'm used to whalin'."

"O no, Joe," said I; "if your mother were really unwilling, I would not have you come on any account. But I think that if I ask her permission to teach you, she will grant it. I shall go down presently and speak to her about it; and if she consents, you may come in to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. And remember, Joe, you must have very clean hands, so as not to soil the paper — Johnny was always particular to wash his hands very clean when he was going to draw. And now you may go to bed. Good-night, Joe."

"Good-night, Mrs. Waters," said Joe. "I hope mother'll say I may come."

After Joe had retired, I went down stairs and spoke to Mrs. Pratt. I told her that I thought Joe had quite a turn for drawing, and with her permission I would like to give him lessons. She was rather alarmed at first, and said that she wasn't in the habit of taking anything but

money for board. But when I assured her that it was for pleasure, not for pay, that I wished to teach Joe, the matter assumed quite a different aspect in her eye, though her astonishment was evidently increased. She freely consented, though she could not imagine what pleasure it would afford me to try to teach such a child as Joe. She never could do anything with him. She was completely discouraged about him. It was the strangest thing in the world, too, that he wasn't a better boy, considering how faithful she'd been to him. Nobody could say he had been ruined by indulgence. Very true, nobody could.

As I was returning to my room, I perceived the form of Joe emerging from a small passage at the end of the hall. He was *partially disrobed*, (as the novels say), and holding up his trowsers with both hands.

"What did she say?" inquired he, eagerly.

"She says that you may come," I replied.

"Good!" shouted Joe, clapping his hands, quite forgetful of the office they were performing. "Good!—then she can't whale me; and when I *can* get along without being whaled, I'd rather."

The next morning, at ten o'clock precisely, came Joe, with a pair of hands that fairly shone from the effects of the scouring which he had given them.

"Good-morning, Joe," said I; "I'm glad to see you punctual: a great deal depends upon punctuality."

It was a rare thing for poor Joe to be praised, and his eyes sparkled with pleasure. To shorten my narrative, Joe's progress in drawing was rapid beyond my anticipations; never was pupil more docile. Gradually, I added a few more branches, and he has entered with alacrity into every study that I proposed, though he seems to prefer

drawing to anything else. Unbounded was the astonishment of his worthy mother at my success. She wished that *poor Mr.* Pratt was alive to see it. The boarders too, when they had discovered that I had taken Joe under my patronage, ceased to abuse him, and he has consequently left off his annoying tricks. Even Monsieur allows that there is a "grand changement in Sho." And I find the hour which I daily devote to him more than repaid by the affection of the hitherto neglected child for me — his first friend — the first one who taught him that he was neither a fool nor a wretch. In short, Mrs. Pratt begins to think that her faithfulness will be rewarded, her prayers will be answered, and that Joe will be something after all.

Evening — Mary Willis has sent me this afternoon a little piece for our next literary circle. I am one of the appointed readers for the occasion, and Mary is too diffident to read her own productions. Here is an extract from it:

"I love to be alone — alone in the morning with the trees, and the flowers, and the birds. I am not alone then — they are all so friendly to me, and talk more kindly with me than any human friend. The waving trees whisper to me. The flowers turn up their bright faces pleasantly to greet me. And the sweet birds seem to be singing solely for my pleasure.

"I love to be alone in the night — alone with the clouds, and the stars, and the beautiful moon. The wondrous stars! how gently they look down on me. The clouds, too — they are for me so many good and wonderful sermons, full of ever new and ever varying thoughts. Often I watch them gradually folding, leaf after leaf, over the face of the moon in soft and dreamy beauty. But

darker and heavier they grow, till her light is completely hidden; and I watch and wait in the darkness and long to see again the face of the fair planet.

"Thus, often the joys and the loves of earth come between us and the haven on which our eyes should ever be fixed. Very beautiful they are at first, like the light clouds before the moon, and the face of our Father is not wholly hidden from us. But gradually they fill our vision. They shut out the light of the better world, and we are left in darkness, to grieve and think how much dearer than all earthly delights is one ray from the Sun of Righteousness."

Mrs. Bolton, also, has sent me an article for the circle, accompanied by a note, saying, that, "my distinct enunciation would enable me to do better justice to her production than she could herself." I will give it to you entire, as I know she would not object to being "extensively perused."

"How delightful to the satiated mind in an ungenial soil is converse with a kindred literary spirit! This remark is promulgated by the recollection of a circumstance which transpired to me once while I was sojourning at Saratoga Springs for the establishment of my health, which had become undermined by excessive reading.

"It was on a resplendent day in August, that I was meandering in a delicious grove of pines in the vicinity of Congress Spring, when I perceived converging towards me a tall and elegant young man, with a rifle under his arm. When he perceived the fair occupant of the forest, he bowed gracefully and was diverging onwards. But being excessively struck with his highly intellectual countenance, I was desirous of entering into conversation with him, and remarked —

"'Seeing you, sir, with your rifle in hand amid this wilderness of trees, reminds me forcibly of that celebrated line of Shakspeare —

"'Just as the trigger's bent, the tree's inclined.'"

"He paused, and regarded me with evident astonishment. It was obvious that I was the first *literati* he had met at the Springs. After a moment he smiled, and remarked —

"'And I am here, as the same poet farther observes —

"'To teach the young idea how to shoot.'"

"From this commencement, our conversation very naturally fell into a highly intellectual strain. I never was more delighted, and the bewitching stranger appeared equally so. He drew out my conversational powers on a great variety of subjects. I think I was never more animated. I talked enthusiastically of my favorite authors, and he asked me a multitude of questions — I regret that I disremember the most of them at this remote period. His conversation clearly evinced that he was deeply imbrued with a poetic temperature. He was evidently quite carried away with me, and actually laughed outright several times in his delight at encountering an individual of a kindred spirit. He repeated several stanzas of exquisite poetry, highly complimentary to me, which were evidently suggested impromptu on the spur of the moment. Our interview was prolonged until the concentrating shades of evening warned us to return to our respective abodes. When we reached the 'United States Hotel,' he bowed with superhuman grace, and was turning to ascend the

piazza, when I remarked that it would be a source of intense satisfaction to me to possess his card. He turned his refulgent eyes upon me, and laying the forefinger of his right hand gracefully beside his nasal organ, said, with an expression which I shall never forget, 'Madam, I am incog.' And bowing again with redoubled elegance, he receded up the long vista of the piazza. I had never beheld the unknown literati since; but I have always labored under a firm persuasion that he was none other than a well known celebrated poet."

I fear greatly that I cannot "do justice" to Mrs. Bolton's article. I have half a mind to get up a cold and sore throat for the occasion, which will enable me to decline the honor. But in that case I must decline Mary's too. What shall I do? I'm in a quandary.

Joe and I are going to have a fine ramble over the hills this evening. He is waiting for me on the piazza below, and I know, by a sort of shuffling stamp which he is performing, that he begins to grow impatient. So I'll e'en close my long-enough letter and relieve him.

III.

TIMBERVILLE.

I KNOW you will pardon my long silence, when you learn the important fact that I am at housekeeping. If you have experienced the trials and vexations which usually attend the setting up of an establishment, surely I shall have your hearty sympathy. But I do not believe you know anything about the enormity of such an undertaking in the country. In the city, you are free from a thousand annoyances and hindrances, which we have to endure in a place like Timberville, busy, bustling, noisy, and growing; a place neither city nor country, but, as it were, in a state of *betweenity*, aping the former, yet possessing many of the peculiarities of the latter, but in nothing resembling those old-fashioned, stationary country villages, in one of which I had the happiness to be born and reared. Dear old Greenvalley! It has been in appearance just what it now is, ever since my earliest recollection. There was undoubtedly a time when it was new and growing, but that time has faded from the memory of man. The only external changes which I remark, as I return from time to time to the peaceful shade of its majestic old elms, are, that here and there a roof has been newly shingled, a fence repaired, and occasionally an entire house has gone

up in the place of one that had fallen quite to decay. One by one, the white-haired patriarchs of the hamlet have been gathered to their final rest, while those of their descendants who have caught this age's restless spirit of adventure, have gone to "seek their fortunes" elsewhere. Only such remain as are content to pursue the tranquil tenor of their fathers' way. Heaven forbid that Greenvalley should ever "take a start and grow."

Here, there is no such thing as doing anything quietly. The whole village must know all your proceedings; everybody must "have a hand in it;" and unless you receive with a good grace the proffered assistance, you are forever undone. I resolved to take warning from the unhappy fate of a certain Mrs. D., who came here to reside about two years ago, and not render myself unpopular, as she had done. Unfortunate woman! She declined the officious offers of the Timberville ladies, to help her "get to rights," and chose rather, with the assistance of the members of her own household, to fit her carpets herself, arrange her furniture, and, what was the most aggravating of all, to unpack her trunks and bureaus, without so much as allowing any of the aforesaid ladies a peep at their contents. Mrs. Philpott, animadverting to me upon Mrs. D.'s conduct, remarked, "We don't know to this day what was in them boxes."

As I did not desire the reputation of being "stuck up," I surrendered, with apparent cheerfulness, my house and furniture to the mercy of some ten or dozen of the Timberville ladies, for the space of about a week. My husband retreated in alarm from the scene of action, and remained quietly at Mrs. Pratt's, until the house was pronounced to be "to rights." Joe Pratt said he thought it

might with more propriety be called *to wrongs;* a very just remark of Joes; for actually we were occupied a full week longer in undoing the greater part of what the ladies had done. Everything had to be re-arranged. The carpets, which they had insisted upon making, had been sewed together in such a manner that the seams burst open and the bindings gave out during the process of nailing down, which was accomplished so crookedly, that one would have imagined every person who assisted thereat to have differed from the rest in her opinion respecting the manner in which they ought to lie. Of course, they had all to be taken up, re-sewed, and put down straight.

But, after the siege which the house had undergone, I thought I had reason to congratulate myself that the destruction of property had been no greater than it was. When they unpacked the crockery, and I saw half-a-dozen pulling and hauling at it, I certainly expected to see it nearly all go to pieces. Consequently, I was thankful to escape with the loss of a few pieces of china, just enough to spoil a set, the demolition of a large lamp-shade, which Mrs. Harris had smashed in her eagerness to draw it from its concealment, and the ruination of a valuable framed engraving, which Mrs. Bolton (our *literati*) accidentally dashed against the corner of the stove, thereby breaking the glass into numberless atoms, and bursting a hole through the middle of the picture. The good lady fancied that she made more than ample compensation by sending me the next day a daub of a painting — a couple of women leading a donkey, and two or three huts in the distance. She accompanied this gift with a note, wherein she stated that the painting was one of a number which she had recently purchased in Philadelphia; it was "a

view of Switzerland, an oriental village near Paris;" Mr. Milligan, the great traveller whom she had met in the city, pronounced it to be a perfect representation.

During the readjustment of affairs, my friend, Joe Pratt, was very useful to us. The little fellow was constantly on hand, ready to assist in a thousand ways. We continued to take our meals at his mother's, until everything was arranged at our new abode. When, finally, that time arrived, and I said, "Well, Joe, I believe we are all fixed at last," the poor boy looked anything but pleased. He would no longer have any excuse for running back and forth. He must stay all day at home, with no relief from his mother's fretfulness and his sisters' rebuffs. His daily visits to my room, his lessons, and our pleasant rambles together, they must all be given up, and Joe was sad.

"Joe," said I, reading his thoughts, "I shall miss you very much."

"And I shall be *so* lonesome," said he, stretching his eyes open very wide, to prevent the tears from running out; "and mother talks of moving away to Ohio, too, and then I shall never see you again."

The idea of parting with Joe was painful to me; for I had become greatly attached to him. A thought struck me of keeping him with us. I, however, said nothing to Joe about it at that time, wishing first to consult my husband on the subject. When Mr. Waters came in I mentioned it to him; he approved the plan; and we accordingly proposed to Mrs. Pratt, that, in case of her removing from Timberville, she should leave Joe with us for at least a year or two. At first, the worthy woman did not appear much inclined to accede to the proposal, and dwelt

with great emphasis upon the pain of parting with her only son. But as soon as she fairly understood that we wished to relieve her from all expense on his account, her feelings underwent a modification; her objections vanished, and she consented. And so it is settled. Mrs. Pratt is to remove to Ohio next month, accompanied by her daughters, and Joe is to come and live with us; an arrangement highly satisfactory to that young gentleman.

The greatest trouble which I have experienced thus far in housekeeping here, has arisen from the difficulty of procuring servants that are good for anything. During the first two months I had *four* different ones. Our first specimen in this line was a girl from the wilds of Pennsylvania, whom Mrs. Stokes procured for me, and pronounced to be "excellent help." She rejoiced in the euphonious cognomen of "Rowena Ruggles." I had been expecting her for several days, but she did not come until the second evening after we were settled in our new home. Her approach was announced by the rattling of a very noisy lumber wagon, which stopped in the middle of the road in front of our house. I looked up and beheld an overgrown, raw-boned girl, accompanied by a gawky boy who drove. The girl was seated on a huge pine box. She rose up in the vehicle, and, after taking a comprehensive view of the house, exclaimed: "Wal, I guess this ere's the sittiwation. Jeems, I'll hold the horse, while you git out and go see'f the Waterses lives here, if they do, you tell 'em that Miss Ruggles has arriv'." Just then a boy, who was passing, gave them the desired information, and the girl alighted and came in. She entered the front door without taking the slightest notice of the bell, and walked

into the parlor where I was sitting. "How do ye do?" said she; then casting herself down on the sofa with native ease and freedom of manner, remarked: "This is Miss Waters, ain't it?" I assented. "Wal, I'm Miss Ruggles," said she, "the young lady you was suspectin'." After communicating this piece of intelligence, she took off her tawdry pink silk bonnet, and white gauze long shawl, and, laying them on the centre-table, inquired: "Hain't you no men folks round? I guess Jeems'll want some resistance about fetchin' in my chist." But she underrated Jeems's abilities, for at that moment he came dragging up the steps the enormous pine box.

Having, by this time, recovered in a measure from the astonishment into which the unceremonious entrance of Miss Ruggles had thrown me, I advanced and met the young gentleman in the hall, and, having directed him where to bestow his sister's box, returned to the parlor and requested Rowena to bring her bonnet and shawl, and I would show her where her room was. She complied; and, on the way, inquired "whether we'd been to supper?" I answered in the affirmative; whereupon she informed me that she "hadn't had none; and Jeems would want some 'fore he went back with the surveyance." I got them supper, after which Jeems returned home; and, after giving Rowena some instructions in regard to her work, I retired with some misgivings, and left her to wash up the dishes.

Upon further acquaintance with Miss Ruggles, I discovered that she understood housework much better than I at first supposed. She could bake, and wash, and do plain cooking very well; but her notions of equality, and her utter ignorance of the proprieties of her station, ren-

dered it very difficult to get on with her. She seemed to expect me to be in the kitchen at work as long as she was there, though in our little family there was not enough work to occupy nearly all of her own time. Every afternoon, she arrayed herself in a very stiffly starched petticoat, and blue muslin dress, and "joined me in the parlor" (as novels say). Her dress, which fastened in the back, she could only hook a little way up, so she bawled out, as she entered, "Miss Waters, I'll get you to hook up my frock." After I had performed this service for her, she was wont to complete her toilet before the parlor glass. After having adjusted a broad, yellow ribbon around her neck, put on a pair of lace cuffs decorated with pink bows, and stuck an immense red and green plaid rosette in her mud-colored hair, she threw herself on the sofa; or, if I did not happen to be occupying it, in my large rocking-chair, and began to converse without restraint. She generally entertained me with an account of the various "ways" of the various ladies with whom she had lived, occasionally diversified with remarks like the following: "I like the way you do up your hair, Miss Waters. I guess I'll git you to fix mine for me some time. I ain't no great hand to do up hair myself. Sister Batsey — she's married a Brigham now, and live to the Flatts out here — *she's* quite a hand to do up hair; hern's a'most as black as your'n. That frock o' your'n looks jest like one Batsey's got; shouldn't wonder if 'twas off the same piece. What did you hef to give a yard for that?"

No matter what I was doing, — reading, writing, whatever might be my occupation, — it was no check upon Miss Ruggles's volubility. It was a dreadful annoyance, and I resolved to get rid of it; but not liking to offend her by

telling her that I would prefer her "room to her company," I tried various expedients to induce her to spend the afternoon elsewhere. I offered her useful books to read in her own room; but she "wa'n't no hand for books." I discovered, on investigation, that she could barely spell out a few words, and had never learned to write at all. I offered to teach her, and told her that I had a spare writing-desk, which she might keep in her room and practise every afternoon. But she declined, saying that "she didn't see no use o' much eddication; her brother Brigham was eddicated, and that answered for 'em all." I asked if she had no sewing that she would like to do, and hinted that her room possessed great conveniences for such employment. But "she wa'n't no hand to sew; sister Batsey ginerally made her things for her." At length my patience was exhausted, when, on returning one evening with Mr. Waters from a walk, we found Rowena in the parlor, seated in my rocking-chair, with her feet on an ottoman, my Cologne bottle in her hand, and playing the hostess to Monsieur Laborde, Mr. Griffin, and Mr. Bunker, who had called upon us. The gentlemen had evidently been highly entertained with her easy manners and conversational powers. I was thoroughly vexed, and told her emphatically to leave the room. Her surprise was equalled only by her indignation. She went out in high dudgeon, slamming the door behind her, to the great amusement of the gentlemen. M. Laborde remarked that "Miss Roogle was very *divertissante*." Her proceedings were anything but amusing to *me*, whatever they might have been to Monsieur and his companions.

When Rowena retreated from the parlor, she went out, by way of compensation, to call upon Mrs. Crandal, the

baker's wife, our next door neighbor, with whom she had struck up an intimacy, and to whom she carried a daily report of "Miss Waters's curus ways." No doubt she received that lady's sincerest sympathy in her affliction, and probably acted upon her advice; for the next morning, as Mr. Waters and I were sitting in the library, she came in abruptly and demanded her wages. It was Thursday. I had hitherto paid her on Saturdays.

"Why do you want your money to-day, Rowena?" asked I.

"Because I'm a goin' to go," said she, angrily.

"What is the matter, Rowena?" said I. "Why are you going off so suddenly?"

"Pay her, Fanny, and let her go," said my husband, who is decidedly opposed to "having words" with servants.

I therefore went to a drawer and got the money for her. But Miss Ruggles was not disposed to depart without a few last words.

"I'm a goin'," said she, "acause you've made an underlin' of me ever sence I come here. You hain't axed me to set down to the table and take a meal o' vittels with ye onct; and Miss Crandal's help allers eats to the table with 'em, and Miss Crandal's as good as you be, any day; and she says it's an impersition; and my sister Batsey lived a year and a half to Squire Huger's, to the Flatts, and she allers eat to the table with 'em; and they was respectabler'n you be, and lived in enough sight grander house. And then, to cap all, you told me I wa'n't wanted in t'other room last night, and I ain't a goin' to put up with it no longer; and *so* — and you may git yer work did the best way ye ken, for all I care."

Having thus relieved her mind, she retired, banging all the doors, and knocking down several chairs in her exit. In the afternoon, Jeems came with the *surveyance* and took away her *chist*. A few days after her departure, my husband received by mail the following note, the production of her *eddicated* brother-in-law.

To mister fillip Wotters. sir

ef you Think that you and your Stuck up wife is a goin' to Sale to hevven in a grander bote than the one your help goes in, your Mistaken i gess. That interesting young Lady roweny ruggles That you Treted so shameful is kalkulated to Be a nornament to Sociaty and would Be ef it want for such Stick ups as you And miss wotters is. i rite to let you know what i And all rite minded gentlemen And ladis Thinks of such karacters as you Be. so no more From yours contemptably.

SILAS BRIGHAM.

On the evening after Rowena left in disgust, Joe Pratt came round to see me, and he undertook to procure us another girl. He knew, he said, one Polly Baily, who had occasionally worked at his mother's when they had a great deal of company. He believed she was not very *bright*, but he knew her to be good-natured. She was now out of a place, and lived at a brother's. I thought I would at least make a trial of her. I therefore desired Joe to go and tell her to come to me for a few days. He readily complied, and soon returned with the information that Polly would be over in the morning. She would have come with him, but she wanted to mend her things and make a new calico apron that evening.

The next morning, while I was preparing breakfast,

Polly arrived. She came in at the back door, and hailed me with —

"*Good* mornin', Miss Waters. I s'pose that's *you?*"

"Yes," said I; "and I suppose you are Polly Baily?"

"'Tain't nobody else," said she, depositing a small bundle on the table and taking off her bonnet, exhibiting thereby a most unique *coiffure*. Her hair, which was very thin, was all drawn together at the summit of her head, tied with a tape string, and twisted into a funny little pig-tail. In person, Miss Baily was short and stout, her eyes were set *bias* in her head, and her mouth was entirely on one side of her face. If she lacked the dignity and stateliness of her predecessor, Miss Ruggles, she fully equalled that young lady in ease and self-possession.

"I should a come last night," continued she, "only my things needed mendin' and fixin', and I had a new calicer apron to make. You see, sister-in-law's baby's ben sick, and I've had so much to do, I hain't had a minnit's time to sew lately. But I didn't git at the apron last night, after all, for sister-in-law went to meetin', and the baby waked up and cried, and I had to tend it till she got back. So I fetcht my apron along: s'pose I shall git any time to make it here?"

"O, yes," replied I; "you will have some time to yourself every afternoon, unless something unusual happens; and you will find a drawer in the table in your room, where you can keep your work."

"Wal, if that ain't clever!" exclaimed Polly. "I shouldn't wonder if you was a goin' to be a real good woman to live with; though Miss Crandal says" —

"It is nearly breakfast-time, Polly," I said; "there are some mutton steaks to be broiled: do you know how to do them?"

"Pity if I don't," she answered. "It takes *me* to cook mutton steaks. Why, when I lived to Miss" —

"Well, here is the gridiron; the coffee is already boiling, and will soon be done. Do you understand making coffee?"

"Pity if I don't! Why, I've made coffee ever sence I was *so* high. Jest tell me where things *is*, and I can go ahead, as you'll find out 'fore I've lived with ye long. I ain't afeard but what I shall suit ye; everybody that has me once wants me agin."

So I gave her the necessary information, and telling her to ring the bell when breakfast was on the table, was going out, when she called to me —

"Miss Waters! I've heerd say how't you don't have your help eat to the table with you; is it so?"

"Yes, Polly," said I; "I always allow my girls the privilege of eating by themselves; they feel so much more at liberty to eat as much as they want, you know."

"Wal, now, ther is something in that," said Polly. "And don't you take off none o' the vittels after you git through?"

"Certainly not; the girls always have the same that Mr. Waters and I have."

"Wal, I say for't; I don't see why that ain't a good idee. Miss Crandal needn't jaw about it as she does; for, after all, it's enough better'n the way she manages. I lived there a spell once, and I used to eat to the table with 'em, and, it's a fact, I was half starved; for she used to be forever tellin' the children 'twa'n't perlite to take anything mor'n once, and so ye see I darsen't do it; and then, the minnit they got through, she ketcht off the vittels and stuck 'em away under lock and key."

"I am glad you are satisfied with my arrangements, Polly," said I, escaping from the kitchen, and rejoicing at having thus disposed of one grand difficulty.

But that breakfast! The mutton steaks were burnt to a coal, and quite uneatable. And the coffee! what could be the matter with it? At the first taste of it, Mr. Waters turned pale with consternation, and rushed to the door to "make restitution" of it (as M. Laborde says). I took a sip, and was obliged to follow his example. I never tasted anything so perfectly horrible. I called Polly, and asked her what she had done to the coffee.

"Why, nothin'," said she; "only, when I took it up, I throw'd in a tablespoonful o' salt to settle it."

I went out and made a cup of tea, not daring to trust Polly to do it; and this, with the bread, which was cut in pieces an inch thick at one end, and slivered up as thin as a wafer at the other, constituted our breakfast. Mr. Waters thought it but a sorry beginning for our new functionary; but I told him that these were evils which, with proper training, could, I hoped, soon be remedied. I spent the whole morning in instructing Polly, giving her the minutest directions about everything in her department of labor; in fact, doing all that related to the preparation of dinner myself, in order to show her how I wished it done; while she kept constantly asserting that "she *know'd* — she'd always been used to *doing* — but then everybody liked their own ways best, and she was perfectly willin' to be teacht my ways, for she wanted to suit me," &c. &c.

After dinner I was in the library, when Polly came bolting in, with a look of extreme satisfaction on her face, and holding in each hand a broken tumbler; the bottoms were gone.

"Look o' there, Miss Waters!" she said. "Ain't you astonished?"

"I am, indeed. How did you break those, Polly?"

"O, law!" said she, "that ain't *it*. I mean, ain't you astonished to see me come and tell on't? 'Tain't every girl 'twould own up so when they broke a thing; but *I do;* you won't never ketch *me* a breakin' crockery and then stickin' on't away, out o' yer sight. I'm honest, as you'll find out 'fore I've lived with ye long."

On inquiry, I found that she had poured boiling water on the tumblers to wash them. I told her never to do so again; though, at the same time, I commended her honesty in telling me of the accident. After she had got the kitchen "to rights," she came again.

"Wal, Miss Waters, the work's all did up now; and I'm ready to go at that apron, if you'll lend me a needle and some thread; I didn't think to fetch none."

I furnished her with these requisites, and she retired to her room. When it was nearly time for tea, she came running in again, quite out of breath, exclaiming —

"Don't ye think, Miss Waters, I hain't took a stitch in that apron yet!"

"Why, Polly," said I, "how comes that? I thought you had been sewing these two hours."

"Wal, that was what I meant to do," replied Polly; "but, ye see, I hadn't more'n got seated by my winder, ready to go at it, when Miss Crandal she spied me from her parlor winder, and she called to me to come over there; so I throwd down my work, ye know, and went over to see what she wanted, and there I've ben ever sence; and Miss Capers and Miss Bennet was there a visitin', you know and they all three sot to and axed me more'n forty

thousand questions about you, and all how I got along here, and what wages I got, and whether I eat to the table with you. I told 'em no; I had the privilege of eatin' by myself, without bein' watched every mou'ful I took, and I told 'em I had enough to eat, too; and a real nice room, besides, to sleep in, with a good clean bed, and a table, and a lookin'-glass in it. That made Miss Crandal feel ruther shamed, I guess; fur when I lived there, I had to sleep up garret, in an old trundle-bed, you know, right where all the old truck was kept, you know," &c. &c.

My hopes of Polly's improvement were doomed to be disappointed; for I found it utterly impossible to impress anything upon her mind. She could not remember from one hour to the next, much less from one day to another. Daily and hourly did I go through with the same process of training and directing. Daily and hourly did Polly protest that "she *would* remember *that* time, I'd see 'f she wouldn't," and as constantly did she continue to make the very same blunders over and over again. She would actually have salted the coffee again the second morning, if I had not discovered her intention in time to prevent such a catastrophe. And the tumblers would have been broken every day, had I not superintended the dish-washing.

The day after she came, the fastidious sisters Bigelow (Carry and Lute) called upon me. I had just gone up stairs to dress, having been engaged longer than usual with my household duties, by reason of Polly's awkwardness. My maid of all work answered the summons of the bell, and admitted the ladies with a very vociferous "Why, girls, how *do* you *do*? Come in."

"Is Mrs. Waters at home?" said Miss Carry, with great dignity.

"O yes; she's to hum," responded Polly; "she's jest went up stairs to put on her t'other things. You step in the parlor; take some cheers; now take off yer things." The ladies declined. "What, can't ye stay? I know Miss Waters would like to hev you, and I'm sure *I* should."

"Carry our names to Mrs. Waters," said Miss Bigelow, commandingly.

"Your names!" said Polly, "less see, they're *Carline* and *Lucy*, ain't they?"

"Tell her the Miss Bigelows are here," replied Carry, with a great accession of dignity to her tone and manner.

Polly was puzzled; but, without asking further questions, she came to the foot of the stairs, which is close to the parlor door, and bawled out to me —

"Miss Waters! the Miss Bigl'ows is here. They told me to tell you their names — I b'l'eve they're Carline and Lucy. They hain't come to stay to tea; so you hurry and come down as quick as you kin."

I was distracted! I rushed out half dressed, and, bending over the banister —

"Polly," said I, "don't stay there any longer. I'll be down in a moment."

"O law," replied the pertinacious Polly, "I'd jest as lives stay with 'em till you git ready as not."

So she returned to the parlor, and entertained the ladies with an account of the advantages of her new place; and I, knowing that to call to her again would only prolong the ridiculous scene, finished dressing with all possible expedition and hastened down, whereupon Polly withdrew, without waiting to be sent, saying, "she guessed she'd go at that apron now." I apologized to the ladies for Polly's ignorance, and said that I hoped to be able to teach her

something in the course of time. Miss Bigelow trusted that I would succeed in the attempt. Miss Lute remarked that such scenes were excessively annoying, and they both declared that the impertinence of the Timberville servants was quite intolerable to them, particularly after being at Brother Peter's, where the domestics were under such perfect control, notwithstanding their number. They then went into a highly edifying description of the domestic economy of brother Peter's establishment, which occupied the remainder of the visit.

After they had gone, I spent an hour in teaching Polly her duty on such occasions. She promised faithfully to observe my directions. The next day, Judge Conway and Mrs. Conway called; and Polly, will you believe it? went through with the very same performance which she had enacted with the Bigelows! She was incorrigible, but so really desirous to please me, that I was unwilling to give her up until I had taxed my ingenuity to the utmost to make something of her. But it was a fruitless task, she could not remember; unless I was with her all the time, everything went wrong. I kept her two weeks, and then gave up in despair. The poor girl felt very badly when I told her that I must discharge her. She said "she liked me better than anybody she had ever lived with; if I would only keep her, she *would* remember my *ways* and try to suit me." But I knew too well her utter incapacity to fulfil this promise to trust to her good intentions. One source of regret with Polly at leaving me was, that "she hadn't finished 'that apron' yet, and she shouldn't have a minute's time to sew at her sister-in-law's." You can therefore imagine her delight when I presented her a black silk apron, ready made, and her ecstasy at the addition of a collar and pair of cuffs to this gift.

"Why, Miss Waters!" said she, "you don't mean to *give* me these right out and out, do you?"

"Certainly, Polly," I replied.

"And ain't they 'ducted from my wages?"

"By no means; they are a present; and here is your money, too."

"Wal, I say for't!" exclaimed she, "you *be* a clever woman and no mistake! I'll show these to Miss Crandal, you see 'f I don't. She used to make me take mor'n half my wages in old clus."

In real Timberville style, I am boring you to death with a history of my "helps." I will not enter into any more particulars on this inexhaustible theme, but merely state that of the two whom I have tried since Polly's departure, the first was a thievish, intemperate Irish woman, whom I dismissed at the end of a week; and the last, a lazy, saucy black girl, of whom you may form a correct idea by this remark of hers. She one day saw two of our most respectable citizens taking a drunken, black rioter to jail. "Miss Waters," said she, "what you s'pose dem two white fellers is gwine to do wid dat colored gent?" This sable functionary "'cluded to trabel," and accordingly set out a few weeks ago for Avon Springs. Since then I have been without a domestic, and, by dint of putting out the washing, and having "old Sammy," an honest, faithful negro man, to come every morning and "do up the chores," I am getting on very well — nay, I enjoy it thoroughly. In fact, I did not know the extent of my own powers, until necessity forced the discovery upon me; and as every day strengthens my confidence in my own abilities, and my husband declares that he never was so happy in his life, I think I shall give myself no further trouble about "helps," as long as we reside at Timberville.

Mrs. Crandal, having now no other means of espionage, has struck up a back-door acquaintance with me; and, I believe, begins to think me not so proud, after all, since I am willing to "take right hold and do" myself. She actually brought in to me, yesterday, a present of some very nice "turnpike cakes," (did you ever hear of them before?) to raise bread with, and also gave me directions for using them, which I intend to put into practice next baking-day.

But there comes Mary Willis. The dear girl's frequent and unceremonious visits constitute a great share of my enjoyment. I have but lately learned something of Mary's early history. I intend to give it to you at some future time; perhaps in my next.

F. M. W.

AUNT MAGWIRE'S ACCOUNT

OF THE

MISSION TO MUFFLETEGAWNY.

AUNT MAGWIRE'S ACCOUNT

OF THE

MISSION TO MUFFLETEGAWNY.

I'VE ben very lonesome lately. Jefferson's gone off to attend lecters, and I sha'n't see nothin' of him in several months; but one thing comforts me: when he comes back, I guess it'll be for good. He's about made up his mind to settle down here, and everybody thinks he'll do well here a doctorin'. There ain't but one person that's advised him to leave Scrabble Hill, and that's Samson Savage. He met Jeff one day when he was home last, and he says, to him in his patronizin' way, "Well, young man, they say you've nearly finished your studies. Where do you calcilate to locate?"

"I've about concluded to stick out a shingle here," says Jeff.

"What!" says Mr. Savage, says he, "you surprise me! Why, you'd be a born fool to do that — a born fool, take my word for it!"

"Why?" says Jeff. "Don't you think I'll succeed here?"

"As to that matter," says Mr. Savage, "I s'pose you'll

do well enough here in p'int of practice, but you'll always be called Jeff to your dyin' day, if you stay here."

"That *is* ruther aggravatin'," says Jeff, "but I guess I must grin and bear it, and depend on posterity to do me justice."

"Hang posterity!" says Mr. Savage; "*now's* the present time."

I'm very glad Jeff don't take a notion to go clear off to Californy, or some other place away out of the land of the livin'; 'twould nigh about kill me if he should. The fact is, he'd ruther be with his father and mother than anywhere else, and he's a genniwine comfort to us. Most folks think he'll get a good run of practice here after a spell. Dr. Pratt's gittin' old, and Dr. Tinkom ain't much anyhow; so Jeff stands a good chance to get along. I'm sorry for one thing; the Fusticks are put out with him. He's got a way of blurtin' out, you know, a good deal like his father; he don't mean nothin' by it, but he made the Fusticks mad. I hope he'll do his best to mend the matter when he comes back, for I can't bear that anybody should feel hard towards my son: I'd ruther they'd be mad at me. 'Twas a little time before Ann Eliza was married — the last time Jeff was home.

What! didn't you know Ann Eliza'd popped off? Well, she has; she's married a missionary, and gone away off to convart the heathen in the island of Muffletegawny. I don't know as that's exactly the name, but it's as nigh as I can come to it, anyhow. Ain't it sing'lar that such a highty-tighty, flirtin' thing should ketch a missionary? She ain't much like Mr. Parson's wife; she 'twas Urainy Slammerkin, old Slammerkin's daughter. I know'd her; she was raised in Wiggletown, where I was brought up.

She was quite a religious, sober-minded young woman. Married Reuben Parsons, from Tuckertown, a good sort of a critter, but ruther softy. They went on a mission to the — the what-do-ye-call-'ems. I never can remember names. Their letters used to be published in the *Gospel Trumpet*. 'Twas an awful hot country where they went, and the people was dreadful savages — didn't wear no clothin'. Some of 'em went to Mr. Parson's meetins, though they couldn't understand a word he said.

Well, the Wiggletown and Tuckertown ladies read the accounts in the *Gospel Trumpet*, and they was wonderfully scandalized to think the poor critters hadn't nothin' to wear to meetin'; so they clubbed together, and made up a great box of clothin', and sent over to 'em all sorts of things, ever so many frocks, and petticoats, and hoods, and pantaloons, and so forth. The Parsonses distributed 'em, and made the savages understand they was to wear 'em to meetin'. So the next time Mr. Parsons preached, in come the barbarians rigged out in high snuff. The men was swelterin' under the hoods, with the sweat all streamin' down their faces, and the wimmin had the pantaloons round their necks, as if they'd been long shawls. The frocks and petticoats they fetcht along, and spread 'em out to sit on.

After the Parsonses had been there about ten years, I saw a notice in the *Gospel Trumpet* — I'd left Wiggletown then — sayin' that "the Reverend Reuben Parsons and his wife, our devoted missionaries to the — the thingumbobs, (I wish I could ever remember names) had left their field of labor, and returned to this country, for the purpose of bringin' over their *eight* children, to leave 'em here. It was their intention to dispose of the children here and there, and then return to their interestin' portion of the

Lord's vineyard." I thought there must be some mistake about it. "It can't be possible," says I, "that any mother would be willin' to give up her children in that way. I'd as soon tear out my eyes as do it." Well, I happened to meet Mr. Parsons and his wife when they was in this country. I was over to Wiggletown a visitin', and they came there to see their friends and bring a couple of their daughters to give away. Miss Major Coon took one — she hadn't no children — and Parson Potter's wife took t'other; she had nine of her own already. I says to Miss Parsons, "Urainy," says I, "'taint true, is it, that you're a gwine to leave your children scattered 'round, and go back to heathen lands?"

"Certingly," says she.

"Well, I'll give it up, now," says I: "I thought it must be a mistake. Why, what's your object in leavin' your children, if you must go back yourself?"

"Oh," says she, "I want to devote the hull of my time and energies to the heathen."

"Well," says I, "I should think if you did your duty by them eight children, you couldn't 'a had much time to attend to the savages. See! you've ben there ten years; you must 'a got 'em to a pretty high state of civilization by this time, for I remember hearin', when you'd ben there only six months, that the wimmin had larnt what their 'rights' was, and put on the pantaloons."

Miss Parsons looked at me with the greatest astonishment, and says she, "You don't seem to understand the subject, Miss Magwire."

"I guess I don't," says I, "for I confess it's an onaccountable mystery to me how you can be willin' to give up your own children so."

"I never regarded 'em as my own," says she; "I look upon 'em as only lent to me by the Lord."

"So much the worse, then," says I. "If they belong to the Lord, and He's only lent 'em to you, of course you'd ought to be all the more careful of 'em, so's to be able to give a good account of your stewardship."

"But you know," says she, "Scripter commands us to leave all and foller the Lord."

"Well," says I, "I never s'posed that meant we was to give away our children and go off to heathen lands, though I don't pretend to be much of a hand at interpretin' Scripter."

"But you know," says she, "the great work of convertin' a world lyin' in wickedness has got to be done. The Apostles was commanded to go preach the gospel to every cretur."

"I know it," says I, "but the wimmin wa'n't commanded to go. We don't read that the Apostles took wives along. And them seventy that was sent out — s'posen they'd all had wives with 'em, how much good do you think they'd 'a done? And after a few years what if they'd 'a sent home eight times seventy children — granting they'd each had your number — for the church to take care of? I guess they'd 'a had to found an orphan asylum to put 'em in."

"Well," says she, "I can truly say that I'm perfectly willin' and resigned to part with every one of my children, trustin' that the Lord will take care of 'em."

"It's time enough to exercise resignation when the Lord calls for 'em," says I; "but as long as He spares 'em to you, it seems to me you'd ought to consider it your

greatest duty and privilege to stay with 'em, and do for 'em as nobody but a mother can."

"I see," said she, "you don't understand the subject at all, Miss Magwire."

"I guess I don't," says I.

Whether Miss Parsons was mistaken or not, I know she *meant* to do right, for she was a good woman, a good, pious woman, enough better than I be, though I wouldn't 'a done as she did for all the world.

But I was gwine to tell about Deacon Fustick's daughter gittin' married. I was surprised, and, I must say, amused, at the performances. Her mother's a dreadful manuverin' woman, you know, always figurin' round to get beaux for her daughters, in an awful hurry to get 'em married off. Sing'lar, ain't it, that any mother can feel so? Why, when Nancy was married and left me, it eny most broke my heart, though she was only an adopted child. I didn't want to oppose it, you know, for she got a very likely young man. But Miss Fustick don't seem to care much who nor what her girls get, if she can only marry 'em off. Amanda wa'n't but sixteen when she was married; her mother made the match entirely, and the man's a miserable stick. There's no tellin' the trials poor Amanda's underwent since she took him. But it didn't seem to be no warnin' to Miss Fustick at all. She went on manuverin' and flourishin' round, pokin' her girls forrard into the face and eyes of all the young men, till she succeeded in gettin' rid of 'em all but Ann Eliza, and she done her best for her too; but somehow she didn't seem to take. She's ruther a pretty-lookin' girl, but she was so lazy, and so fond of dress, and so etarnally in the streets, laughin', and hollerin', and bawlin' at everybody she met,

and doin' everything she could to attract attention, that she overshot the mark. Nobody didn't seem to take a fancy to her; the young men seemed willin' enough to beau her round, but they didn't want her for a wife. At length, her mother begun to get discouraged about her; so last fall she packed her off to spend the winter in Gambletown, where they've got some rich elbow cousins. The theological siminary's located there, you know, and I s'pose she thought 'twould be a good place to try her luck.

She called to our house one day in the winter, and told me she'd had such a gratifyin' letter from Ann Eliza, she wished she'd a thought to fetch it along with her and read it to me. Ann Eliza had become so very much interested in the cause of foreign missions, and felt to regret that she hadn't hitherto entered more fully into her ma's views and feelin's on that subject. "You know," says Miss Fustick, "that's a cause that lies very near my heart."

I was surprised enough to hear it of Ann Eliza; but I knowd there was something behind the curt'in, and waited patiently to see what 'twas. The next time I saw Miss Fustick she told me that Ann Eliza had got so exercised in view of the dreadful condition of the heathen, especially the Muffletegawnys, that she'd made up her mind to go on a mission to 'em if pa and ma was willin'. "Of course we esteem it a privilege to have her go," says Miss Fustick. Well, I was surprisder than ever, and couldn't help tellin' her so; but she didn't seem to consider it anythin' strange at all. And it never once entered her head to think but what Ann Eliza was a very suitable person for such an undertakin'.

"Law me!" says I, "if she's in such distress to go on a mission, send her up here to Puddenbag Lane; 'taint

far off, and she couldn't desire to see a more heathenish set than the folks that live there; 'twould be a first-rate field of labor." Miss Fustick gin me one of her looks, and walked off without sayin' another word.

A few weeks after that, Ann Eliza got home, and then the mystery was all explained. *She'd got a beau!* a Mr. Simpson, a missionary to the Muffletegawnys (I guess that's the name). He'd lost his wife about six months before, and come back to get another, and fetch his six children over to make this country a present of 'em. He was edicated at the Gambletown Siminary. So he went there to look round, got acquainted with Ann Eliza. She was wonderfully interested in his accounts of Muffletegawny, and he was wonderfully interested in her. In short, they got engaged about a week after they first saw each other. He was to sail in a few weeks, and Ann Eliza came home to make preparations for leavin'.

I declare I couldn't help laughin' to see how hard she tried to look dignified and solemn. I called to see her a few days after she got home. Jeff went with me; he and she was old cronies; they'd had many a frolic together. She was wonderful stately to us, had her face drawd down about half a yard long.

"So, Ann Eliza," says Jeff, "it seems you're O P H for Muffletegawny!"

"Yes," says she, with a doleful kind of a look, "I'm about to enlist in the cause of missions. Oh, Jefferson! how rejoiced I should be if you'd become a missionary!"

"Should!" says Jeff, says he, "do you think I could *cut out* Mr. Simpson?"

Ann Eliza skrewed the corners of her mouth and tried to look dignifider than ever, but she had hard work to make it out.

"I've a notion to try," says Jeff, cockin' up his eye. "You hold on a spell and give me a chance."

Ann Eliza snickered out, and says she, "Git along, Jeff Magwire! you make me laugh in spite of myself."

The next day Deacon Peabody's wife come to our house and told me that the congregation was gwin to make up a box of clothin' for Ann Eliza, and said she s'posed I'd esteem it a privilege to contribbit my share towards it. Well, I didn't view it as any great privilege to be sure, but I thought I'd ought to give somethin', so I said I'd send a piece of bleached muslin. Miss Peabody said that Ann Eliza had received a good many presents, articles for housekeepin' and so forth, from her friends in Gambletown, and she hoped there'd be enough contribbited in Scrabble Hill to make up her outfit. She said that the ladies that wished to avail themselves of the privilege of assistin' in this great object would meet at Deacon Fustick's the next Friday afternoon and sew for Ann Eliza; of course I wouldn't miss of comin', and I might fetch my contribution along. I told her I'd come if I could. And she went home.

I'd gin up attendin' the sewin' society since Parson Tuttle was sent off, for I'd made up my mind there was more hurt than good come of 'em. I held a meetin' at home, alone by myself, went into a committee of the hull, and past a unanimous resolution of disgust at sewin' societies in gineral, and the Scrabble Hill sewin' society in partic'lar, and detarmined never to attend it agin.

But after Miss Peabody went away I thought it over, and concluded to go, for 'twan't a reg'lar meetin' of the society, and, to tell the truth, I had some curiosity to see what would be done. So when Friday came, I takes my

piece of muslin and starts off for Deacon Fustick's. I told Mr. Magwire to come after me in the evenin', but he said he'd be hanged if he would; so Jeff asked if he mightn't come. "You may if you'll promise to behave," says I. "Of course I'll do that," says he.

When I got there, I found quite a number of ladies collected, old and young. The old ones were knittin' stockin's for Mr. Simpson, and the young ones was makin' all sorts of things for Ann Eliza — capes, collars, cuffs, and what not. The Skinners was workin' a pair of foot-stools with woosted. Liddy Ann Buill was makin' a fancy head-dress. Polly Mariar Stillman was embrawderin' a mornin' cap. Jo Gipson's wife and Miss Brewster was sewin' lace on to a number of pocket-han'kerchers. Ann Mariar Lippincott was workin' a pair of slippers for Mr. Simpson. Gloriann Billins was makin' him a green velvet smokin'-cap, figurin' it all over with gilt cord. And Ann Eliza herself was workin' him a pair of fancy suspenders. The Peabody girls was makin' a blue muslin sack. Miss Samson Savage was there, too, pickin' her teeth, and exercisin' a gineral supervision over the rest, orderin' this one and commandin' that; as for sewin', she said they needn't expect her to do any, for she'd eat such a hearty dinner she couldn't. Miss Fustick and Miss Peabody had gone over to Harristown to buy Ann Eliza's carpets, and engage a dressmaker to come over and make her new dresses. She's got three very nice silk ones, and a number more, and there want no dressmaker in Scrabble Hill that was fashionable enough to rig out a missionary's lady.

For a spell after I got there, I sot and looked with all the eyes I had. I didn't know what to make on't. Thinks

me this ain't much such an outfit as Miss Parsons had. How the times is altered! I guess they mean to astonish the natives. After a spell, Miss Samson Savage spoke up and says she —

"Well, Miss Magwire, do you want some work, or do you calculate to set and hold your hands all the afternoon?"

"No," says I, "I want to help if there's anything I can do, but I aint no hand at fancy work. I fetcht along some muslin I thought would do for shirts and such; if there was some things cut out of that, I could sew on 'em."

So I went into the hall and brought it in. Ann Eliza got up and examined it, and said 'twas altogether too coarse for such purposes, but she guessed 'twould do for very common kitchen-chamber sheets. If I was a mind to, I might tear off some and make 'em. I was kind of hurt, for I'd took pains to pick out what I thought was a nice fine piece. But I didn't say nothing. I tore off the sheets and went to work at 'em; Margaret Pettibone took hold and helped me. She kept a-tradin' on my toe all the afternoon. Mag's pretty keen; there's a good deal of the "white horse" in her; she's a good hearted-girl, too.

Bymeby Miss Fustick and Miss Peabody got back. They was in high spirits, for they'd made some first-rate bargains in carpets and hearth-rugs. The marchant had throw'd off considerable when they told him the things was to go on a mission. "I says to him," says Miss Fustick, "that no doubt, under the circumstances, he'd esteem it a privilege to let us have 'em as low as possible. He said, 'Certingly,' and I think we got 'em very reasonable indeed."

In the evenin' there was several young men come in. And the new minister, Parson Pulsifer, he was there too. He's a single man; ben here since about the middle of winter. Cappen Smalley, and a few more of the richest men in the congregation, after they'd got rid of Parson Tuttle, detarmined they'd have a single man; they come cheaper than married ones, you know. Of course all the wimmin that had daughters to peddle off, and all others that was willin' to dispose of themselves, fell in with the plan, and so they gin Mr. Pulsifer a call. He was preachin' in Punkin Hook on trial at the time, and accepted the call. He's wonderful popilar with 'em all, more so than any minister they've had before. He's quite a young man, and very good lookin'. He was brought up a few miles out of Boston, I forget the name of the place. They think he's terrible eloquent here, especially the young folks. But, for my part, I don't consider him nigh so deep a man as Parson Scrantum was; and in p'int of plain, practical sarmonizin' he doesn't come up to Parson Tuttle by a good deal. I try to make the best of him though.

I always try to like my minister, for I do hate to hear folks, especially wimmin, forever findin' fault with their minister, complainin' about his style and manner, or his want of this, and too much of that, saying they aint edified, and all that sort of stuff. I don't often see a minister that I can't larn something from, if I'm a mind to be teachable and take home to myself what they say. But, somehow, Mr. Pulsifer puzzles me. I listen just as close as ever I can; I give my hull attention to him when he's preachin', but I can't make head nor tail on't. His language is so kind of double-and-twisted, that I can't for the

life of me make out what he's drivin' at. He might as well preach in Dutch, for all the good it does me.

Once in a while he has a sentence that sounds some like other folks, and I begin to feel encouraged, and hope he's a comin' down to the level of my comprehension. But the next minute he's away in the hyasticks ag'in, stringin it off about the "great All-soul of creation," and so on, and I give it up in despair. But I never say nothing about it, for I won't talk about my minister, nor discuss his qualities with nobody; 'taint right.

It's amusin' to hear the remarks made about him by the young folks, especially the girls. "What a delightful preacher!" says one. "Did you ever hear such a sermon?" says another. "How animated!" says another. "I never could go to sleep under *his* preachin'." The Skinners come up aside of Jeff and me one Sunday as we was gwine home from meetin'. "Don't you think Mr. Pulsifer treated the subject in a very original manner?" says Almira.

"Very!" says Jeff, "entirely original" —

I hunched him, for I saw he was gwine to say somethin' he hadn't ought to.

"Don't you think him very sublime?" says Sophrony.

"Well," says Jeff, "it's a great deal to call a man sublime, but I think we may safely say our minister ain't but a *step* from it; for you know Burke says" —

I gin him another hunch, and so he stopt short; for I'd heard him quote that remark before. Jeff's quite inclined to make fun of Parson Pulsifer, but I never encourage him. When we got home, I told him never to say nothin' disparagin' of his minister, and he promised he wouldn't.

Mr. Pulsifer writes poetry, too, and the girls go into

fits over it. To my mind, it's dreadful sing'lar poetry. I never saw nothin' to beat it. Full of wrong-end-foremost words, and goes hitchity-hitch along. Sounds to me like sawin' through a board full of rusty nails. Jeff says the minister's got a high-dutch muse, but I tell him to hold his tongue. You'd laugh, though, to see what a time there is a-settin' caps at him. The young girls have all got to be wonderful stiddy, go-to-meetin' characters since he came. They wouldn't miss the Wensday evenin' lecter for nothin'. The Skinners think Polly Maria Stillman acts like a fool over Mr. Pulsifer; and Polly Mariar thinks the Skinners are desperit pious all of a sudden. Charity Grimes thinks Liddy Ann Buill's conduct is ridicilous for a person of *her age;* and Liddy Ann thinks Charity Grimes had better get a *wig*, if she wants to ketch Mr. Pulsifer. And so they have it, back and forth, all over town. I can't help bein' amused, and Jeff has lots of fun out on't.

But I was tellin' about the meetin' at Deacon Fustick's. Well, in the evenin' Miss Samson Savage said she wanted to see the rest of the presents that Ann Eliza'd received; so Miss Fustick brought 'em out, and spread 'em on the table. Grammany! it a'most dazzled my eyes to look at 'em. There was a dozen silver forks, presented by a rich lady in Gambletown; a splendid tea-pot from another; a lot of napkin-rings from some young ladies in that village — Miss Fustick said that the Gambletown folks was deeply interested in the cause of missions; then there was a couple of elegant butter-knives from Miss Samson Savage — she launches out once in a while, and does somethin' grand — and quite a number of articles for the table that I don't know the names nor the use of; and there was no end to the capes, and collars, and neck-ribbons, and flummydiddles of all sorts that had been gin to her.

While we was a-lookin' at the things, Jeff came in. He jest glanced at 'em, and then sot down by the stove and went to talkin' with Deacon Fustick. I felt relieved, for I was afraid he'd be makin' some of his speeches. There was a number more young men come in, and after a spell Mr. Pulsifer arriv. When he made his appearance, we all sot down, and there was a gineral time of puckerin' and primmin' among the girls. Almira Skinner draw'd her chair up to the table, and went to readin' in a Bible that laid there, as if there wan't nobody in the room but herself. The conversation turned on to the subject of missions before long, and Miss Fustick said she hoped Ann Eliza'd have grace to sustain her in her great undertakin'."

"I hope so too, ma," says Ann Eliza. She sot twirlin' a napkin-ring on her fingers.

The deacon remarked that "'twas a great thing to give up all for the sake of carryin' the Gospel to heathen lands — a very great thing."

"It is, indeed," says Ann Eliza, glancin' at the butter-knives.

Parson Pulsifer said something about "heart devotion and world-wide influence,' and then Charity Grimes begun to talk away about the duties and responsibilities of a minister's wife, both at home and in foreign lands; she's got a long tongue. Miss Samson Savage winked at the Stillmans, and the Stillmans winked back agin. Liddy Ann Buill was settin' beside me, and says she, "Did you ever! that's to let Mr. Pulsifer know how well *she* understands a minister's wife's duty."

Polly Mariar Stillman said she intended to propose to the ladies, at the next meetin' of the sewin' society, to pay

for the eddication of one of the Muffletegawny boys, to be named "Jeremiah Pulsifer." Mr. Pulsifer bowed, and thanked her for the compliment. I couldn't help pityin' the poor little savage, whoever he might be, that had got to have such a name.

Jeff spoke up, and says he, "I don't know much about these Muffletegawnys; desperate heathen, I s'pose, though, ain't they, Ann Eliza?"

"O yes," says she, "they're victims of idolatry."

"Poor benighted barbarians!" says Jeff, with a groan, "how I pity 'em!"

Miss Fustick was sittin' t'other side of Liddy Ann Buill, and she reached acrost, and hunched me, and says she, "Has Jefferson experienced religion?"

"Not in partic'lar," says I.

"I didn't know but he had, from the way he spoke," says she. "Thought perhaps they'd had a *special effort* in Coonville, and he'd ben brought in."

"Hereafter," says Jeff, very solemnly, "I shall take a great interest in the Muffletegawnys."

Miss Fustick reached acrost agin, and says she, "Depend on't, Miss Magwire, he's exercised in his mind, anyhow. I shouldn't wonder if Ann Eliza's mission had set him a-thinkin'."

Jeff groaned agin. "Poor critters!" says he; and he lookt at the wall and shook his head. You'd 'a thought his hull soul was wrapt up in the heathen. The young men stared and didn't say nothin'; Parson Pulsifer lookt surprised, and I confess I wondered myself what Jeff was up to.

"It's a great work, Brother Pulsifer," says Deacon Fustick, "a great and glorious work, this mission to

Muffletegawny, and I feel to rejoice that a daughter of mine is about to take her life in her hand and go forth to engage in it."

"Dear me!" says I, "I don't see how you can bear the idea of partin' with her to go so far off; like enough you never'll see her agin."

"Oh, Miss Magwire," says Deacon Fustick, "you hain't got the right kind of feelin' about it; we'd ought to rejoice" —

Miss Fustick interrupted him, and says she: "For my part, if I had half a dozen daughters left, I should esteem it a privilege to have 'em all devoted to such a work."

"Well," says I, "I can't feel so, nor I can't see how anybody can."

"Mother," says Jeff, very seriously, "you don't understand it all; you don't view it in the right light."

"You're right, Jefferson," says Ann Eliza; "your ma's views are peculiar; I hope you'll convince her of her error."

"I shall try," said Jeff, and he gin another dreadful groan.

Miss Fustick poked over to me agin, and says she, "Take my word for't, Jeff's under consairn, and he'll come out before long."

"Mother," says he, "jest consider the condition of the Muffletegawnys; think how deplorably ignorant they are. Why, they never saw nor heard of *napkin-rings*, *butter-knives*, *silver forks*, *and so forth!* and I don't s'pose they know a smokin'-cap from a stage-driver's jockey! Now, ain't it important that they should be taught the use of such articles as soon as possible, and learn how *Christians* live? It's a great work, mother, a very great work."

For a spell after Jeff had freed his mind, there wa'n't a word said by nobody. Deacon Fustick ham'd and haw'd, Miss Fustick lookt perfectly stumpt, and Ann Eliza didn't seem to know what to make on't. Bymeby, Margaret Pettibone whispered to me, and says she, "I guess Jeff's *come out* ruther sooner than Miss Fustick expected."

After a spell, Deacon Fustick requested Mr. Pulsifer to "address the throne of grace." Somehow I don't like to hear that; it sounds too much like sayin' "make an oration to the Lord!" When the prayer was ended, we all went home.

After Jeff and I got out of hearin', I scolded him soundly. "Jeff," said I, "I'm ashamed of you. How could you sarve me such a trick, after promisin' not to cut up?"

"O, no, mother dear," says he, "you're mistaken; I didn't promise so. I said I'd *behave*, and didn't I?"

Ann Eliza was married a few weeks after. They had quite a weddin'. Husband and I was invited, *but Jeff wasn't;* and, on the hull, I was glad on't, for if he'd 'a ben there, like enough he'd 'a let out another link. Husband went with me; he was cur'us to see Mr. Simpson, and so was I. He was quite a spruce, good-lookin', youngerly man, with big whiskers and gold spectacles. His riggin' throughout was all in the latest fashion. The girls all thought his manners was very polished, but there was ruther more bow and scrape about him than I like; I'm old-fashioned, though.

Parson Pulsifer married 'em, and I tell you he did it high snuff. After the cake was past round there was a great time about a ring that they pretended was in it, and the one that got it would be married next. Of course

'twas all hurraw boys, and giggle and titter for the rest of the evenin'. But Ann Eliza sot still on the sofy, and lookt as interesting as she could. I didn't see her stir all the evenin'. A short time before we broke up, Miss Fustick went round and brought 'em to order, and we had several "addresses to the throne of grace." Deacon Fustick led, Deacon Parker and Deacon Peabody follered, and Mr. Pulsifer closed. After that they sung "From Greenland's icy mountains," for a windin' up. Then we bid Ann Eliza good-by, and went home.

They left the next day. There was quite a number of waggin loads of young folks went over to Harristown with 'em to see 'em take the cars. Jeff went too; he didn't lay it up not being invited to the weddin'. Margaret Pettibone said that when Jeff went up to bid Ann Eliza good-by, he gin her a good smack, and says he, "Now, Ann Eliza, if Mr. Simpson don't use you well, let me know, and I'll come over." Mr. Simpson didn't know who Jeff was, and he stared over his gold specs in perfect astonishment.

Parson Pulsifer writ a piece of poetry on the occasion. 'Twas printed in the *Gospel Trumpet* and copied into the *Scrabble Hill Luminary*. I saved the paper that had it in. I'll get it, and you may read it; read it out loud, and see if it doesn't kind of make yer jaws ache.

THOUGHTS ON THE FAR-GOING OF THOSE TWO DEVOTED SOULS TO THE MISSION-LAND OF MUFFLETEGAWNY.

Go! haste, great-hearted pair!
The big, heaven-sent message bear
  To heathenism's wildernesses —
The night-dark regions where
  Superstition's demon hisses.
Over darkness' realm forlorn
Up-raise the gospel horn.

High! high! and blow! blow! blow!
A blast, loud, long, earth-sundering,
Which roaring, rumbling, thundering,
From pole to pole shall go!
Till the black, sky-high throne,
Which the dire all-fiend uprears,
Tumbles down, stone after stone,
As a huge skeleton bone after bone
Crumbles to demolition,
In the down depths of perdition,
And world-wide disappears.

REFISLUP

GOING TO SEE THE PRESIDENT.

GOING TO SEE THE PRESIDENT.

'OTHER evenin' the Deacon and I was a settin' by the stove ('twas ruther a chilly evenin'), I a nittin' and he a readin' the Paris Hill Dimocrat (my husband's a terrible dimocrat, it's all there is agin him), when lo and behold, our Zebidee cum in (he's the deacon's son, my step son) a clappin' his hands, and kickin' up like all possest.

"What's to pay now?" interrigoried I.

"Hooraw," says he; "I've ben warned."

"The dragon," says I, "who's had the audackity to warn you agin sin and temptation, when yer father's ben deacon risin' twenty year?"

"Don't ye know nothin'," says he, "I've ben warned to train, and I've got to go down to Skeeterburrer next Monday to muster."

"O, grandfer gracious," says I, "I dident make no fuss when Jabez had to train, 'cause there warn't no signs o' war then; but seems to me in these ere days it's awful dangerous to be a trainer."

"What for," says the Deacon, says he.

"Why," says I, "my fust husband use to say how't if Van Buren ever got to be President, ther'd certing be war. So now he's appinted, I suspect ev'ry day when the storm

o' war'll bust over our heads; and O, dear suz it's awful, to think of Jabez and Zebidee a fightin' in the midst of combatlin' hosts."

"O, 'shaw," says Zeb, "what do you know about war?"

"Or pollyticks, eyether," says the Deacon.

"About war, you sarsebox!" says I to Zebidee. "I ruther gess I know as much about it as you do, for my grandfer fit in the revolutionery tussle, and I've heern him discribe it time and agin. As to pollyticks," continyd I, glancin' at the deacon; "I know as much about 'em as I want tew; my fust husband was quite a pollyticker, and what's more, he was on the right side. He hated old Jackson, and all the dimocrats, like pison, and I gess if he'd a lived a spell longer, Van Buren never'd a ben president, for *he* wouldent a voted for him, even if he'd a ben sure o' bein' made supervisor for't."

"Missis Gorum," says the Deacon, says he, "I hope you don't mean to cast no reflexions."

"O, dear," says I, "do you s'pose you'd a ben made supervisor if you hadent a quit the whigs, and jined the dimocrats?"

"Permilly," says the deacon, says he, edgin' his cheer up to me, and tappin' of me under the chin. "Permilly," says he, "don't never say no more about that are, that's a purty creetur."

"Lemme alone," says I, shovin' off. "What do I know about pollyticks?"

The deacon he lookt kinder grieved, and took up his paper and went to readin' agin. Zebidee he cleared out, and we tew was left alone by ourselves. Arter a spell, I begun to feel ruther onpleasant, and thinks me, I show'd

ruther tew much spunk about that are speech o' the Deacon's seein' it's the fust dizagreeable thing he ever said to me. Well, we sot so much as an hour, and feeling myself intirely onable to indure the hidins of the Deacon's countenance any longer, I jumped up all of a sudding, run up to him, huv my arms round his neck, and bust into a terrible flood o' tears. The Deacon was dretfully affected; he imbraced me tenderly, exclamagatin, —

"Milly, darlin', you do know suthin' about pollyticks; certingly ye know enough to cum over onto the right side, when you've ben on the wrong. Don't ye, blessin'?"

"O, Deacon dear," says I, "don't never illude to the dizagreeable subjick of pollyticks in my presence agin."

"Well, I won't," says he.

Jest that minnit sumbody knockt to the door, and says I, "Walk in," and in cum Squire Jones.

"Hooraw! hooraw!" says he, and then he up and danced a jig in the middle o' the floor.

"What in natur's to pay," says the Deacon and me, says we.

"Why," says he, "the President's a guayne to be to Utica day arter to-morrer."

"You don't," says the Deacon, says he.

"Jest so," says the Squire; and we're all a guayne down to meet him; all the dimocrats of this ere stiff dimocratic town; and you must go 'long, you know the papers tells about the staunch yomandery of the kentry; the back-bone o' the nation turnin' out to meet the president in their lumber waggins, in rael republican stile. Well, that's jest the way we're a guayne. He's suspected to Whitestown about ten o'clock, and there he's a guayne to got off the cars, and the hull town of Utica's a cummin' up to carry him down to their place."

"On a rail?" says I.

"No, by jolly," says the Squire. "On a fust rate hoss."

"Massy sakes," says I, "if they don't have a rail, seems to me they'd or'to have a jackass, or sum sich creetur for him, so's to look republican, and corrispond with the flambergasted waggins that's a cummin' to meet him from all directions."

"Oh, shaw!" says the Squire, "what do you know about"—

"Stop, Squire," says the Deacon. "Don't talk up to my wife that way."

So the Squire dident eend what he begun to say, but says he: "My wife's beset to go long, and I tell'd her how't if your wife would go, she mut go tew, so what do ye say to't?"

"Why, it depends on circumstences," says I. "Sha'nt I have to hooraw nor nothin'? 'cause 'twould go awfully agin my conshence to hooraw for Van Buren."

"The old boy!" says the Squire, "who ever heerd of the wimmin's hoorawin' on sich a 'casion?"

"Well," says I, "I dident know but what they did, 'cause I never went to no sich doin's. Well, Ile accompanate ye."

"That's you," says the Squire, and then he went hum, and jest then Zebidee cum hum, and right arterwards my Amandy. Malviny returned from singin'-school, and Kier Simpson with her. (Kier's ben takin' arter her risin' tew year.) Well, Amandy and Zebidee was beset to go, so we concludid to let 'em. And Kier said he'd take Amandy in his surveyance. Well, the Deacon, and me and Zebidee, we went into the kitching and left Kier and Amandy alone,

(weve ben in hopes he'd cum to the pint and ax her to have him, for sum time; and it's high time he did for he's went hum with her from singin'-school and conf'rence meetin' risin' tew year, and I'm sure I don't know what the creetur means by puttin' off so, for he's ividently very much besmitten with her, and no wonder, for she's an oncommon interestin' young woman, looks very much as I did when I was a gearl; there ain't a feller in our place but what would be glad to git her. But she's ividently more pleased with Kier, than with ary other feller, and I wish to gracious he'd suppose himself to her.) Well, the next day, we was all day a gittin' in a state of reddyation, and the Deacon he tell'd me to dew up his ruffled shirt, for he said, "seein' he was a guayne to eat dinner with the President, 'twas recumbent upon him to look as slick as possible."

"So," says I, "yer a guayne to eat dinner with him, hay?"

"Certingly," says he, "what else should I go to Utica for."

Well, thinks me, if the Deacon wants to eat dinner with the creetur, he may, and I won't say nothin' agin it, tho' I druther be hanged than to go long with him, but I will neverstandin'.

Well, the next mornin' we all got reddy very airly. Zebidee he harnessed the hosses, and Amandy and me we habiliated ourselves as follers. She put on that are yaller figgerd silk gownd o'hern, and her black silk mankiller with white fringe round it, and her pink slurred bunnit with a master sight of artifishel roses and chany asters on't, and if she dident look purty it's no matter. I put on my cinnamon colored canton crape, 'cause I reckon it's more becomin' to my figger than ary gownd I've got. Then I wore my red meryno shawl, and my green silk bunnit sur-

mounted by one long black ostridge fether; and I must say I lookt oncommon well. But goody grievous! how Missis Squire Jones *did* look! Missis Jones is a master nice woman and persessed of considerble intellectitude, but she haint no more taste in the arrangement of her attire than an old cow. But I can't spend time to discribe her twilight.

Well, Kier he cum in his one horse waggin, and Amandy got in with him, and the Deacon and me, and Zebidee, we got into our surveyance and purty soon all the rest of the folks cum along, and by seven o'clock the hull sivilcade sot out. Well, by ten o'clock we arrove to Whitestown and druv up to Capting Clapp's Hotell, and arter takin' sum pie and cheeze we sot out to go to the railroad, the Deacon and me and Zebidee fust, Squire Jones and lady next, Kier Simpson and Amandy next, and arter them the rest of the remainder of our townsfolks; and in that monner we plummenaded down to the railroad, and I swonny, I b'l'eve we extracted as much attention as the president himself. There was thousands and millions o' folks in the streets and they did stare at us consairnedly, at me pertickilerly, for I must say I was the most extinguished individyal in our party in pint o' looks. I never was in sich a crowd in my born days.

Me and Amandy and the Squire's wife, was the ony shemales to be seen. And arter a standin' there as much as an hour, and the President dident come, I says to the Deacon says I, "Deacon, dear, I feel kind o' timersome about standin' here among sich a mess o' men folks."

"Well, I don't," says Missis Jones, "I ain't afeard of their bitin' of me." (Missis Jones is awful bold.)

"O Kier," says Amandy, "I wish Ide a wore my vail, the men folks stare so."

"O," says Kier, "that's 'cause they ain't use to seein' sich honsome faces." "O lawful suz!" says Amandy says she, "yer a blaggardin' of me." Jest then the folks hollerd out "the cars is cummin'," and sure enough purty soon the injine cum a smokin' and buzzin' and clatterin' along, and the Deacon and Zebidee they hysted me onto the fence so I could see over the folks.

"Do ye see him?" says the Deacon.

"No," says I.

"Why," says he, "that are gentleman with gray briches on that they're jest a hystin' out 's him."

"O," says I, "do ye mean that are short old feller, ruther corputent, with gray and yaller hair a stickin' out so consairnedly."

"That's him," says he.

"O lawful sakes," says I, "we might a seen enough better lookin' men without cummin' so fur."

"True," says the Deacon, says he, "but they wouldent a ben all presidents."

Jest that minnit there was a pussy man cum puffin' and blowin', through the crowd, leadin' a very 'rantic hoss, for the President to ride on; and a number o' men took hold and boosted Marting up. As soon as he was fairly surmounted, he spied me, and he took of his hat and begun a bowin' to me at an all killin' rate. I no doubt he was very much struck with my appearance, for it did seem as if he'd stare me thro'. Well, he kept a bowin' and I kept a curchyin' on the fence, till I begun to feel ruther flustrated.

"O dear," says I, "I feel turrible dashed to be stared at and bowed at so, Ime a blushin' like all natur. Deacon dear, do take me off this ere pre-eminence."

"O lawful suz," says Missis Jones, "I wouldent be afeard o' the face o' Clay."

"Nor me nyther," says I, "for I don't bleve Clay's got sich plagy sharp eyes as Van Buren has."

Well we went back to the tarvern to reassume our waggins and perceed to Utica. It had bid fair to be rainy all day and jest as we got to the capting's, it clouded up wuss than ever, and lookt as if 'twould pour every minnit, and Missis Jones said for her part she want a guayne a step furder, she'd no notion o' gittin' as wet as muck for all the presidents betwext here and Passamaquoddy Bay.

"Me nyther," says Amandy Malviny, "I aint so anxious to ride behind the President as to spile my bunnit for't."

"Well," says I, "I aint no frind o' Van Buren. My fust husband was a stairn, uncountermisin whig, and he always endeevord to distill his sentiments into me, but neverstandin' that, Ime a guayne to Utica, and it's jest to gratificate my dear husband the Deacon. I aint afeard of a little rain. Ime nyther sugar nor salt, and Ime a guayne to Utica, I don't ker if the Dragon stands in the door."

"That's you, wife," says the Deacon, squeezin' my hand. So he and me and Zebidee, we got in our waggin and rid off, leavin' Missis Jones and Amandy and Kier to the Capting's, where they said they meant to stay till the shower was over.

We had to drive amazin' tight to ketch up with the republican rottenow, but at last we got tew 'em and druv into the citty at the hindmost eend of 'em. Instid o' stoppin' at the hotell, Van Buren went hum to eat dinner with the gentleman that brung up the hoss for him, and I heerd (tho' I dident see it) that when he rid up to the

door, there was a couple o' very ginteel young wimmen cum out o' the house and carried him in on a lady's cheer.

"Well," says the Deacon, says he, "I aint a cummin' clear to Utica to eat dinner with the President, and then be cheated out on't," so we left our surveyance to the tavern, and the Deacon and me and Zebidee, we walkt over to the man's house. Well we knockt to the door, and nobody dident 'cum, so Zeb he gin a thunderin' kick and then there was a nigger wench cum.

"Is the President here?" says the deacon.

"Yis, sir," says she.

"Well then, show us into yer settin'-room, we've cum to dinner." The nigger stared and dident offer to stir.

"Don't ye hear, you black creetur," says I, "show us into yer settin'-room."

So she opened a door and rushered us into a turrible nice room. "Now," says I, "go tell yer Missis to set three more addtitional plates to the table." So she went off and purty soon the man that fetcht the hoss up to Whitestown, he cum in mighty fierce with a wonderful ginteel lookin' woman behind him.

"What's the meanin' o' this?" says the man.

"Why, we've cum to eat dinner with the President," says the Deacon, says he.

"Have hay," says he. "Well, Ile tell ye another story. My house aint a tarvern."

The Deacon he was bethunderstruck and darsent say another word. So I up, and says I, "Mister, I gess if you knowd who you was a-talkin' tew, you'd be ruther perliter; this ere's Deacon Gorum; and he's not ony deacon, but superviser to boot, and Ime his pardner, and this ere's our son, and we've cum bettern fifteen mild a purpose to eat dinner with the President."

Have hay," says he. "Well Ime sorry to say we can't accommerdate ye. My wife haint cookt more'n enough dinner for she and I and the President, and Mr. and Missis Boneset, have ye, my dear?" says he, turnin' to his wife. (She stood there with her honkercher up to her face a-gigglin'.)

"My! no," says she, "and Ime ferful we shall cum short as it is, if Mr. and Missis Boneset is very hearty to eat."

"Whose Mr. and Missis Boneset?" says I.

"Lawful sakes!" says she. "Don't ye know, why it's the Secretary and Secretaryess of War."

"There, Deacon," says I, "dident I tell ye there'd be war? Now I reckon the sooner we git hum the better." Jest then I happened to spy Van Buren a peekin' thro' a crack in the door, so thinks me, Ile giv him a stirrin' up, "so," says I, castin' a look of suvering contemp at the man and his wife, "Ye may go to the Dragon with yer dinner. I don't want nun on't. I aint no Vanburenite, and my fust husband wouldent a wiped his old shoes on Marting. He was as stiff a whig as ever trod shoe leather, and so be I and so was the Deacon, till Satan tempted him to go over to t'other side. I s'pose the evil one reckoned they needed one decent man among 'em."

"Git out o' my house," says the man.

"With all the pleasure on airth," says I, makin' an all sufficient low kurchy, and walkin' off with oncommon dignitude, the Deacon and Zebidee follerin'. Well, it was a rainin' considerable smart, so we went as fast as we could to where we left our waggin, and got in and rid over to Elihu Slocum's (he's an intimit frind o' the Deacon's, moved from our place five years ago; his wife's a very

ginteel woman). Well, we went there, and they was terrible glad to see us; got dinner for us, and treated us very perlite. But the Deacon was dretful sober — he felt awful cheap about bein' used so by that dimocrat and his wife. But he didn't say nothin' about it afore Mr. Slocum, and he winked to me not tew, 'cause Slocum's a whig, and the Deacon know'd he'd bother him to everlastin about it if he heerd on't. Well, arter dinner Zeb he went out, and purty soon he cum back, and says he, "Father, the President's down to the hotell a shakin' hands with his frinds, don't ye want to go down and see him?"

So the Deacon he said he'd go, and he axt Mr. Slocum to go. Slocum said he wouldent give a darn to shake hands with the President, but seein 'twas the Deacon axt him he'd go. So they went, and byme by they cum back, and the Deacon lookt considerable chirker'n he did afore he went; and thinks me, I wonder what's the reason. Well, it slackt up rainin', and arter urgin' Missis Slocum to cum and see us, we started for hum. And arter we was in the waggin and fairly agoin, the Deacon he says to me, says he, "Well, if I dident eat dinner with the President, I've had an uncommon perlite reception from him. We went into the hotell, and purty soon we war introducted. As soon as the President heerd my name, he says, says he, —

"'Ah, Deacon Gorham, I'm delighted to see you; set down here a minnit.' So I sot down, and he whispered to me, and says he, 'Deacon, that was a scurvy trick they sairved ye at my frind's down here. I hope ye don't think I had any hand in it. Realy, when I peeked into the door and see how they used ye, and reflected that sittyated as I was, it was unproper for me to interfere, my sufferins

was intolerable. You must cum to Washington next winter and eat dinner with me at my own table, and bring yer wife. By the way, she's a splendid woman, I was very much struck with her appearance; and that son o' yourn, smart feller that, he'll make a man one o' these days, and no mistake. Sorry I can't convairse a spell longer with ye, but I've said more to you than I have to ary one individdyal to-day. Good-by, Deacon,' 'Good-by, President,' says I; then we shook hands agin, and I cum off." Well, we went home, and I tell ye, the Deacon never told nobody about tryin' to eat dinner with the President, but he's told more'n a hundred times how he had a long conversation with him, and what he said about me and Zebidee. For my part, Ime a whig, my first husband was a thoro' guayne whig, and I don't think I shall ever be anything else; but arter all taint in natur for me to feel so hard agin the President sence what he said about me, as I did afore; and I haint made up my mind yit whether I shall oppose the Deacon's votin' for him next election or not.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

3 0112 003480685